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1936

# THE CORNHILL MAGAZINE

EDITED BY  
LORD GORELL



MARCH  
1936

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GEORGE R.I.

ALL that a King might do,  
All that a King could give  
With a Royal grace, the long reign through,  
Was his prerogative.

Keen to his people's need,  
Faction or creed or clan,  
And the least sublime in the Empire's breed  
He served as man to man.

Gracious, serene and kind ;  
Calm when misfortune broke,  
Welding his Race to a single mind  
Firm to withstand the stroke.

Guiding the ship of state,  
His light touch on the helm ;  
And ever the Throne was inviolate  
Heart of his sea-girt realm.

Mourned with an Empire's tears,  
Duty his simple creed ;  
His light will shine through the distant years,  
A Royal King indeed.

S. H. RADCLIFFE.



## THE RIVER OF ENGLAND.

(Westminster Hall : January 24-27, 1936.)

### I.

THE river flows : the people of this land  
 In sombre lines file past their King's long sleep ;  
 Bowed buttresses of Fate, the warders stand  
 And motionless their constant vigil keep.  
 In reverence the English ages steep  
 The mighty hall as rustlings of the tread  
 Of many, slow-paced, mourning thousands creep  
 Up to the old, arched beams : no word is said,  
 A stricken nation gives its silence to its dead.

### II.

Beneath this roof great, captured Wallace stood  
 And Strafford, stern, proud prisoner at bay ;  
 Here wrathfully an army sought the blood  
 Of Strafford's king ; here Warren Hastings' way  
 Was mired with conflict, onward to the day  
 When here the land's legalities were spun ;  
 Here, every conflict ended, Gladstone lay,  
 And here beside his sovereign's sceptred son  
 In nation's grief, as now, the high and low were one.

### III.

'As now'—in England past and present merge,  
 Linked by the living river of our race,  
 Yet changing ever as the thunderous surge  
 Of wind-swept water falling on one place  
 In varying sameness : to this stone-flagged space,  
 This England's heart, the seventh Edward came,  
 And all the people mourned his vanished grace,  
 His kindly wisdom and his kingly aim  
 Yet firmer bonding a throne based on Victoria's name.



## IV.

Here lies his son at rest—Does kingship change ?  
To England's Kings can come one rest alone,  
When Death's cold finger points to freedom strange  
And outworn body yields its earthly throne.  
Of old all served the King : in splendour grown,  
The King serves all. This day Truth cries aloud,  
He nothing did that was not Duty's own,  
The highest yet the humblest, he was proud  
Only in this, he reigned to life-long service vowed.

## V.

He sleeps, this King beloved : the dark-hued grief,  
The silent river flowing from the stair  
Is all around him, paying homage brief ;  
Then, passing slowly to the wintry air  
With one last backward look upon the bier  
Where gleams the Crown of Empire, joins the sea  
Of myriad, saddened homes, leaving him there  
Till to his fathers he shall gathered be—  
The sable pageant fades, and he is history.

## VI.

Yet is the springing impulse of our life  
Poured out upon Earth's current ceaselessly :  
He saw the whole world ravenous with strife,  
Air conquered and the ether held in fee,  
All customs quickened, crowded—let it be ;  
His kingdom greater stands, his service grows,  
A heritage of human loyalty  
He lays upon Time's hand in trust for those  
Hereafter to be kings—onward the river flows.

GORELL.



*EAST IS EAST.**III. THE VOYAGE HOME.*

BY MAJOR C. S. JARVIS.

IN the spring of the year there is only one topic of conversation in Egypt and that is the all-absorbing, all-important question of leave home. Not only is it an intensely interesting subject, but it is also very opportune as we have all been meeting each other regularly once a week throughout the winter, so that every ordinary topic of conversation has long been exhausted. One knows exactly how many duck Robinson shot at Tel-el-Kebir last December and remembers the total more accurately than Robinson himself; one is fully acquainted with the startling success of Mrs. Jones's daughter, who came out last season and turned down at least half a dozen eligible suitors in the first week; and one has known for years the full pedigree of Mrs. Brown and the titled ancestors who positively jostle each other out of the branches of the family tree.

When one has been an exile in the East for a considerable period one obtains an enormous satisfaction out of describing the motor tour one proposes to do through England's smiling land in the car that one intends to buy, and the fact that neither the tour nor the new car materialises in actual fact does not detract from the enjoyment a jot; and one can listen to Smith's account of how he is going to fish every reputable water in the west of Ireland, knowing full well that for financial reasons he will probably spend the whole of his leave with his parents in Ealing.

When discussing leave, however, one must not expect any great enthusiasm on the part of one's listener if he happens to be one of those unfortunates who are not getting home that particular year—the subject to him is entirely lacking in interest, and the best line to take is to expatiate on the wonderful cool summers Egypt has been experiencing lately and the delightful emptiness of Gezira's normally crowded golf course during the leave season. This invariably ensures one's popularity and a signal to the passing club waiter.

The people who do not go on leave every year are divided into



two categories, namely, those who really cannot get away owing to pressure of work or shortage of staff, and those who are compelled to remain owing to the expense of the journey and the size of their families. The first type are usually quite human and reasonable about the matter and say with a sigh : ' You lucky dog, I wish leave were as easy in my department as it is in yours.' The second class, however, for some unexplained reason adopt the attitude of upright and noble men who put their work before their pleasure, and wear self-constructed haloes of sacrifice and devotion to duty. Their reply to one's query about leave is usually to the effect that they are not going home owing to impending political trouble that calls for the presence in the country of all reliable and experienced officials, and that far too much attention is paid to this question of taking leave which, if they had any say in the matter, would only be granted once in three years as a concession and not a right. It is considered tactless on these occasions to comment on shipping companies' fares and the great expense incurred in taking a large family plus a governess to Europe. We Anglo-Egyptians may not be a particularly intelligent class, but we are all of us clever enough to realise each other's intentions and the reason for every action.

The topic of leave incidentally is a very fruitful one as there are so many different routes to be taken and such a variety of shipping lines from which to choose so that one may get through an otherwise boring evening by discussing the respective merits of the P. & O. and Bibby lines, or whether it is patriotic to travel by the Italian vessels when so many British ships are available. The Italian ships that run from Alexandria to Venice or Genoa are very largely patronised by the English officials of Egypt, and, considering the number of British ships laid up at home and the extent of unemployment in the mercantile marine, it is a moot point whether one should put one's convenience first to the detriment of one's country's well-being. On the other side of the picture is the fact that the English lines that call at Port Said only welcome Egyptian passengers when they cannot obtain bookings from people going farther East. It is easy enough to obtain a passage in a first-class British mail boat when one is homeward bound in June or July, and the ships from India and Australia are travelling half-empty, but it is a very different story when one wishes to return to Egypt in October and the Companies are expecting to book every berth with passengers bound for Bombay, Burmah, or Australia. The Lines concerned have a special Ananias department that writes to



the intending passenger to the effect that owing to heavy bookings there are no berths available, but that one's name will be kept on a waiting list and if a vacancy should occur through death or other mischance the applicant will be given the first refusal. This means that though there is plenty of space available at the time the Company have no intention of booking a single passenger for Port Said until all prospects of selling tickets to people going farther East have gone. This is not a very satisfactory state of affairs for an official who has to be back in the country on a given date, and he spends the last few weeks of his leave in a state of uncertainty as to how, when, and where he will land up in the country of his adoption. There is therefore some excuse for the man who books his return passage in one of the subsidised Italian lines engaged in the Mediterranean ferry service.

The drawback to the Italian lines is that one never remembers if one is a 'Signore' or a 'Signori,' and regrettable cases have occurred of most respectable and moral officials being found in a state of nature in a lady's bathroom. There is also the uncertainty if one is not an Italian scholar of deciding whether the hot tap is 'scalda' or 'fredda.' It is so difficult to decide when one is in a hurry, but whichever it is the water that gushes out of the tap is invariably the opposite to what one expects. That is to say if the bath is too hot one is immediately scalded lobster-colour, or if too cold one is turned purple by a sudden jet from the refrigerator. Actually this does not surprise the Anglo-Egyptian to any great extent as he is accustomed to untruthful taps, it being the custom in Egypt for the plumbers to put the hot tap on the cold pipe and vice versa, and I remember one particular bathroom with two hot taps. Owing to the fact that in this house the heating arrangement was permanently out of order neither was giving a correct statement of its contents.

The English too are a very insular and intolerant race, and strongly object to sharing a cabin with any but their own nationality. The British lines know this little peculiarity and are very careful not to mix the breeds if they can help it, but the Italian companies naturally do not see the matter in quite the same light. I once shared a four-berth cabin in an Italian ship with a Syrian drug-trafficker, a Serbian priest, and a Japanese naval officer, and the only one I had any use for was the Jap as he did bath and change his clothes. The others slept all standing and were not worried over the question of the respective meanings of 'scalda' and 'fredda.'



On one occasion on a British ship an officer from my own particular Department, named Georgetti, found to his horror that he was sharing a cabin with a man named Fratelli. I suppose Georgetti must have had Italian ancestors some distance back in the past to account for his name, but it must have been very far back, for he was the most aggressively British individual I have ever met. He was naturally horrified at the discovery and hurried to the purser's office to demand an exchange at once, but on arrival had to wait while another very typical Englishman unburdened himself of his complaint. This individual, who had British officer of the Indian Cavalry written all over him, and who sported red hair and a bristly ginger moustache, was furious because he also had been put in a cabin with a damned Dago—a fellow called Georgetti.

'And what is your name, sir?' asked the Purser.

'Fratelli,' was the reply.

One of the peculiarities of ships sailing from Port Said is the inability of the travel agents to foretell with any degree of certainty the date and time of sailing. One would think that with the great advance in wireless communications that it would be the simplest thing imaginable to give passengers an approximate time, especially as the ship has to come through the Suez Canal, but unfortunately this is not the case. One receives a communication that the ship will sail at midnight on a certain day and arrives at Port Said by the evening train expecting to go on board at once and to wake up the following morning with a fresh breeze from the Mediterranean blowing in through the porthole. One's hopes, however, are dashed to the ground on arrival at the port when the information is broken to one gently that the ship has not yet entered the Canal at Suez. This means a night at one of the hotels with a noisy dance band playing jazz under one's windows till two o'clock in the morning. Moreover, if one is the father of a large family the installing of the whole outfit in an expensive Egyptian hotel for a night knocks a considerable hole in the money allotted for travelling expenses.

The real ordeal of the journey, however, is running the gauntlet of the passengers from farther East who are already old hands on board and who keenly resent the arrival of the passengers from Port Said. It is a remarkable fact that on every voyage that one makes one has a look round at the assembled passengers and says to oneself: 'Never in all my life have I seen such a ghastly collection of duds and deadheads'; and this is how it strikes everybody whether they join an outward bound at Tilbury or a homeward bound at Bombay.



The feeling that the passengers from farther East entertain for those who join at Port Said, however, goes much deeper than that, and one is not regarded merely as a dud or deadhead, but as an unclean beast or international crook graded as Public Enemy Number 1. The short journey up the companion ladder and across the deck is probably the most harrowing experience short of walking to the scaffold that can be imagined, for the Anglo-Egyptian will find grouped along the rail and in a cluster at the top of the ladder a bunch of people glaring at him with eyes expressing loathing, hatred, and unspeakable contempt, and he will hear the remark: 'The worst lot I have ever seen.' If he is an old hand at the game this will not knock a feather out of him, for it has happened to him for every voyage during the last fifteen years, and he gets square by remarking to his companion: 'These people from India and the Far East seem to get hairier every year.' This mutual crabbing is a time-honoured custom dating back to the opening of the Canal in the 'sixties' and signifies nothing as the following day, after the all-important question of an equitable allotment of pegs and cupboard room has been arranged, the whole party settle down together and become warm friends.

The first morning one awakes with a glorious feeling of 'God's in his Heaven—all's right with the world' as one has slept without a mosquito net for the first time for ten months and there is a cool salt breeze blowing in through the porthole. The tea that one's steward hands one has that queer taste peculiar to all ship's tea and the apple looks as if it had been in cold storage far too long, but one is so pleased to see a white face again and to hear the English language, even though it is spoken with Liverpudlian accent, that one overlooks any shortcomings. The steward announces that one's bath is ready so one hurries off, shaves, and dresses, and then to one's horror discovers that it is only seven o'clock and breakfast is not till 8.30 a.m. This is bad enough, but on glancing at the smoke-room clock one notices that, owing to the time having been put back forty minutes during the night, it is really only 6.20 a.m., so that there are two hours and ten minutes to wait for breakfast and the first really keen appetite for nearly a year to aggravate the situation.

There are two places above all others where the day seems far too long—a military hospital and a passenger ship—and in both there is that fanatical craze for early rising. One is sent into hospital a nervous and physical wreck through overwork and fatigue



and the first morning in the half-light of dawn a ruthless sister shoves a thermometer in one's mouth and then proceeds to inflict that torture known as the bed bath, whilst the ship's steward unless checked will have all his passengers out of their cabins and pacing the decks two hours before breakfast. If one should grumble about it one is very firmly but kindly put in one's place—it is an entirely wrong idea for the patient in a military hospital to think that he counts in the general scheme of things as the really important part of the day's curriculum is not the patient's comfort and well-being but the inspection by a very martial R.A.M.C. captain who will shortly pass through the ward and see that all the beds are dressed by the right. In the same way the steward is far more occupied in his mind with the inspection of the captain at 9.30 a.m. than he is with the happiness of his passengers.

There are always some old familiar types that one meets on these ships from farther East, and one can generally count on finding specimens of every variety on board. First and foremost there is the very big man with the voice of brass who has been appointed either by himself or a weak-minded sports committee to run the games and sweeps, and who makes Hitler-like announcements at every meal. These men, who are invariably of enormous bulk, are elected apparently because of their size as no one would assault them with impunity and the heaving of them overboard on a dark night would be a task of considerable magnitude. Their one aim and object in life is to prevent anyone settling down in a chair with a book or a chosen companion, and immediately this sports fiend sees somebody making himself comfortable in a quiet corner of the ship he at once butts in and hauls him off to play in the semi-finals of the deck quoits. I have never discovered what these men are in private life, what profession they follow, and how their wives and families, if they possess them, exist. I can never envisage them as anything but sports' committee men on board ship and sometimes wonder if they ever do anything else.

Then there is the very senior official from some dependency of the British Empire, whose demeanour at all times is redolent of salutes, red carpets, and salvos from guns, and who seems to expect the same treatment on board. He always sits at the captain's table which the experienced traveller, if he does not wish to be bored stiff, always avoids like the plague, and so he does not worry one much. Incidentally one is quite likely to meet him after retirement walking down the Earl's Court Road with half a pound of hake in



a fish basket and looking out for a No. 28 bus instead of a Rolls Royce with a Union Jack on it.

There is also the middle-aged aggressive female, ordained by Nature and a far-seeing Providence to dwell alone in a big house at least a mile away from any other habitation, who finds herself boxed up in a cabin the size of a dog kennel with a woman of whom she disapproves heartily—in most cases a rather fluffy girl who drops powder over everything and leaves smears of lipstick on the looking-glass. Hostilities start very early in the voyage, and if the purser cannot find a spare berth somewhere the unfortunate captain is called upon to make peace or effect an armistice for the rest of the voyage.

And last but not least there is the naughty girl from Calcutta, Colombo, or Rangoon, who gets talked about on board, and who is incidentally a good bit faster than anything that we can produce in Egypt. Owing to some unexplained circumstance—some unhappy whim of Fate—it is nearly always this girl who finds herself in the position of stable companion to the aggressive female mentioned in the last paragraph.

A very consoling feature of the voyage is the impression the Anglo-Egyptian obtains to the effect that he is to all intents and purposes a teetotaller. He may have had inward misgivings for some time that his daily consumption of alcohol has been slightly in excess of what is considered moderate, but after two days with the passengers from farther East all these disturbing thoughts are dispelled and he becomes convinced that he and all the Anglo-Egyptians are entitled to wear a piece of blue ribbon in their button-holes—and this is a most satisfying feeling to have. It is a very common sight to see a group of half a dozen men in the bar at 6.30 a.m. drinking gins and bitters and whiskies and sodas as eye-openers before they take their baths, and as alcohol before breakfast is not an Egyptian habit one experiences that comforting, 'thank God I am not as other men' feeling that has such an invigorating effect on the ordinary character.

Another type that one meets on board these ships are those who, for want of a better name, can only be described as the Women who go East—the sisterhood who marry the officials, merchants, planters, engineers, etc., that constitute the varied ingredients that go to make up this Empire of ours. It is impossible to generalise, for between them they embody every type of womanhood—tall and short, blonde and brunette, placid and highly-strung, attractive



and dull, some have worn well—but they are rare—and some have aged prematurely, and they, alas, are all too plentiful. Taking them as a class they command one's respect and admiration, for they are women who play their part in the world and who keep the flag flying in the bungalows of the East. They suffer the damp heat of the jungles of Burmah and the Malay States—the variable climate of India—the scorch of the Sudan sun and the blistering Haboob—and the nerve-racking glare of Egypt and Iraq. They fall sick of malaria, typhoid, and dingue; and last but not least they know what it is to spend months of long, featureless mornings in darkened bungalows shuttered against the heat of the sun outside. Their menfolk have their work—their offices to attend, plantations to inspect, and a hundred and one jobs to keep their minds off the heat and relaxing climate, but their wives have none of the ordinary tasks that go to make up the average woman's daily life, for in the East the whole of the household organisation is carried out efficiently by native servants, and after ten minutes with the cook and his book the day's work is done. In the big cities in the Orient a woman can spend a part of her morning shopping, but for every one stationed in the midst of civilisation there are a hundred out on the estates or in the deserts, who have nothing but books and needlework to support them during the long, boring days spent in semi-darkness.

In some climates, such as the Sudan for instance, the children have to be kept permanently at home from birth, whilst in others, in the interests of health and education, they must be sent to England at the age of eight or ten, and from that age on their parents only see them during their leave at home, which in the case of many people is only once in three years. It is a rather harrowing experience to return East at the beginning of October and to travel with a number of sad-faced women who have spent the summer holidays with their children and are returning to exile knowing that they will not meet their sons and daughters again for three years.

I take off my hat to the women who go East, for on the whole they are a brave and uncomplaining sisterhood. I have seen them on the homeward-bound voyage on a sticky Mediterranean night, tired and jaded after three years abroad, and wearing frocks that were fashionable three years ago—and what this means to a woman no man can understand—but dancing with all the zest and enjoyment of young débutantes to a scratch band of ship's stewards playing the tunes of the year before last. There is something about



these women that compels one's admiration, for they have indomitable pluck and grit, and they see their youth fade all too quickly, but for better or worse they have married a man who goes East, and the East is the only home they will know till it is too late to enjoy life.

The Mediterranean is such a safe sea, especially in summer-time, that it is very seldom indeed that anything untoward occurs to mar the comfort and pleasure of the voyage. The sea is usually in a state of flat calm all the way, so provided the engines keep turning over there is nothing to prevent one arriving at Marseilles sharp on time on the fifth morning after leaving Port Said. The most serious thing that ever occurred to me was a fire in the forehold caused by spontaneous combustion of rice bran that had been loaded in a damp condition, and this regrettable business kept me and the rest of the passengers tied up in Messina harbour in the stifling heat for two precious days of our leave. There was no danger whatsoever to make the episode exciting—the ship's crew first tried to put the fire out by filling the forehold with steam from the boilers and as that had no effect we went into Messina harbour and sea water was pumped in till the ship was well down by the head. The whole episode was exceedingly boring and the only interest it provided was when the unfortunate passengers brought their 'wanted on Voyage' luggage on deck from the baggage-room, which owing to the fact that it was situated in the forehold had been first filled with steam and then soaked in sea water. Having no baggage in the room myself I could regard the matter from a quite detached point of view and amused myself by going round and inspecting the damage done. We had a sweepstake on the result, but it was very difficult to award the first prize which was finally divided between a cavalry officer who had had six pairs of polo boots boiled on their trees, a lady with a typewriter that was vivid red with rust, and the owner of a large and sodden library—until one has actually seen it one cannot imagine the effect that steam followed by sea water will have on books.

Another regrettable delay when returning on leave was caused by the stokers going on strike at Gibraltar; and this was more serious as it was in the year 1919 and the ship was full of officers travelling home for demobilisation after four years of war. The thought of even five minutes' delay was exceedingly distasteful to them and, much to the fury of the stokers who otherwise had a very good chance of extracting higher wages, we went in a body to the



captain and offered to stoke. The offer was accepted gladly and we stoked the ship home so successfully that the chief engineer's only fear was that we should blow up the boilers.

On another occasion, a few hours outside Port Said, we came across a Greek steamer sinking fast and hove-to to render assistance. The Greek crew then boarded our ship by means of their boats, but, when a visit by one of the British engineers to the sinking vessel brought to light the fact that the only trouble was that the cocks had been intentionally opened to scuttle the ship, the foreigners were asked to return. As they showed some hesitation in doing so, and protested vigorously, our second officer assisted them to their boats by kicking the Greek captain the length of the deck, to the intense and unholy delight of our crew, for it is not every day that one can see a ship's captain being kicked in the posterior by a second officer.

Another thrill occurred on a homeward voyage when the ship, having left the long breakwaters of Port Said harbour some five miles behind, was heading north-west under full steam. Suddenly a Royal Air Force officer ran up on deck, gave a frantic look at the dim shore-line, and rushing to the captain on the bridge demanded to be put on shore at once. It appeared that he had come on board to say farewell to the lady of his heart, and as parting is such sweet sorrow had arranged to protract it to the uttermost by returning to the shore with the pilot in his launch. The pilot on leaving the ship had made an attempt to find him, but failing to do so had concluded that he had already gone ashore, and so had departed in his tug some ten minutes previously.

If there is one thing a captain objects to most strongly it is stopping his ship with all steam up, and this particular captain was no exception to the rule. He flatly refused, but the Air Force officer, who it appeared was absent without leave, was in such a desperate state, threatening to jump overboard and swim ashore, that finally the captain agreed to stop the ship and send a wireless for a special launch if the company were adequately compensated for the delay. This was done, and some two hours later a tug from Port Said took the officer off, but the unfortunate part of the whole business was that, as the wireless message had been picked up by the officer's own particular squadron, the full details of the occurrence and the fact of the officer's absence was made known to the one man he wished to keep in the dark—his commanding officer. His persistence was worthy of a better fate, but one wonders if the lady



was really worth all the trouble—from her very light-hearted behaviour on the rest of the voyage one rather doubted it.

Another episode concerned a set of false teeth, and although one usually connects humour with these artificial and unpleasant fittings there was really nothing very amusing about this particular case. An unfortunate official in the Indian service, owing to pyorrhœa, had had all his teeth removed and had obtained special short leave to England to enable him to be fitted with a complete set of false ones. He was returning to India with the newly-made and very expensive set, and every night before going to bed removed them and placed them in a glass on his wash-stand. One night there was a hilarious party on deck, and after the bar was closed somebody produced a couple of bottles of whisky and some soda-water, but glasses were necessary and were not available. In the darkness a raiding party set out and went into all the single cabins on the upper deck, removing the tumblers from the wash-stands while the occupants slept. The glasses were given a hasty sluice out with water that was tipped over the side, and the party proceeded to enjoy themselves, but the following morning the unfortunate victim of pyorrhœa found that his false teeth were missing and learnt after investigation that they were reposing on the bed of the Mediterranean some hundred miles astern. The fact that the revellers were ordered by the captain to pay full compensation was very poor consolation to the hapless owner who was able to eat nothing but slops for the rest of the passage.

A marked feature of every voyage is that if one should engage a ship's officer in light and chatty conversation about soundings, logarithms, the day's run, and other masterpieces of the obvious of this description he will not fail to change the subject at the first opportunity to freights, fares, etc., and will then in a threatening tone of voice impart the information that passengers are a dead loss to the Company. I do not know if this is done to forestall the passenger for fear he should complain about the fish at dinner the night before or the insufficiency of the bathing accommodation, or whether it is because mercantile marine officers are naturally a lugubrious type and see everything in the blackest light. Whatever the cause the passenger is informed that there is no profit in anything at sea, and apparently ships are run solely to let the stewardesses see something of the world or to enable the captains to get away from their wives. They will admit grudgingly that if freights are particularly good and fuel oil and wages very low the



ship might just balance her profit-and-loss account, but this balance is invariably upset by the vast debit caused by the passengers. This has a most depressing effect on one, especially if one sits at an officer's table at meals, for one has that awkward feeling 'that every morsel that passes one's lips is begrudged one,' and one is afraid to tell the steward to bring some more butter.

Officers will tell you quite candidly that they much prefer cargo—coal, tallow, hides, and even frozen carcasses of mutton—to passengers. A frozen carcass does stay put when it comes on board, it does not bring a lot of noisy children with it, and it never argues about its wine bill at the end of the voyage. This gives one that unhappy, unwanted feeling, and it is absolutely shattering to the little Colombo blonde who has been looking forward to a lesson in astronomy with a curly fair head tucked into a blue serge shoulder as she follows the pointing finger that indicates the Pole star and Orion.

I suppose passenger traffic must have shown a profit at one time otherwise shipping companies would not have built cabins to accommodate three perfect strangers, who hate each other at sight, and one bath to every hundred of the despicable creatures—but those happy days have obviously departed and you need a very thick skin if you discuss economics with a ship's officer. As the Americans put it very aptly: 'they tell you where you get off.'

Another peculiarity about ship's officers is the mystery they create around such a simple matter as the time of one's arrival in port. In these days of advanced efficiency the ship's staff, when they leave Port Said, know to within an hour the time they will arrive at Marseilles. They have always three or four knots in hand, and if there is a delay by fog or weather it can be made up quite easily, but if one should presume to ask an officer at what hour one may reasonably expect to arrive at Marseilles his attitude invariably resembles that adopted by my old grandmother when as a small boy I used to ask her what certain obscure and improper passages in the Bible meant, namely, a knitting of the brows and a remark to the effect that there are certain things not nice for a little boy to know and he should not ask questions about them. One asks for this very necessary information as one wishes to wireless one's agents in Marseilles to book sleepers, etc., but for some unexplained reason the officer thinks this is gross inquisitiveness on one's part—such things are not for passengers to know and he more or less



conveys the impression that it is unforgivable presumption to have discovered that the ship is going to Marseilles at all.

The most important and final event of the short voyage across the Mediterranean is the ceremony of the presentation of the wine bills on the last day, and for the next hour there is a definite atmosphere of shocked incredulity in all parts of the ship, increasing in intensity in the vicinity of the purser's office. Before one has got over the amazement of discovering that one is a confirmed wine-bibber the representatives of the travel agents come on board to break the news that owing to the unexpected arrival of a cruise party there are no sleepers available on any train leaving Marseilles that day, and with the pleasing prospect of a long night, propped up in the corner of a rocking, sooty railway carriage, we bid farewell to the ship and the East, and set our course north-west to the land that calls us back so strongly every year.

*Sinai.*

#### A NEW-CUT ASHLAR.

*(In Memoriam : Rudyard Kipling.)*

A NEW-CUT ashlar takes the light  
On high Olympus. Newly fired,  
The Sacred Flame takes flame more bright,  
Renewed by him whom it inspired.

Who, lest all thought of Vision fade,  
Brought Vision to his fellows' sight,  
Upward to reach beyond their trade,  
And upward look beyond their night.

One stone the more swings into place  
On those high steps of Vision's throne,  
Whence Vision, having shown her face,  
Stooped earthward to reclaim her own.

A. S. M. HUTCHINSON.



*THE WHITE ROSE.*

BY PAMELA HINKSON.

WHEN Maurice Pollen, as a reward for services rendered, was granted 50,000 acres of Irish land by the English King who had received those services, no one could say that he had not a good bargain of it. For the rent which he and his lawful heirs and successors were to pay for that land was no more than a white rose, to be given on a certain day of each year to the King or Queen of England then reigning.

For this payment the Pollens received those acres, on some of which Maurice Pollen had looked when he came through a gap in the mountains from another county which was so different from this one that he might have crossed the sea to come to it, and reined in his horse and sat gazing before him. He saw green fields, too green if he had thought of it to be trusted, little ricks of turf, brown against them, wide bogs the colour of squeezed blackberry juice, with here and there a bright treacherous stretch of green. A black oblong of water below a newly cut pile of turf looked as if it might have been prepared to receive a man's body, being just the length and width for it and with the turf near by to cover him after. Again, a bog pool flashed under the sky, the silver of steel, and the river wound like a shining ribbon. The nearest hill was the colour of the black plums that grew on the red sun-soaked wall of Maurice Pollen's garden in Devonshire.

A long way from Devonshire, this, which Maurice Pollen saw first in the amethyst light of a late summer evening. While he sat his horse, gazing before him, a little shower of rain opened first on the mountain-tops and then, travelling slowly, splashed against his face. The small drops of rain were as soft as the hands of the Irish children who lay dead on that road which Maurice Pollen had recently travelled. The rain passed while he was still seeing the faces of the children before they died, feeling their small clutching hands. He might forget in time, but not yet. And there was something else that was even harder to forget than the hands of the children. Staring at the country before him, he saw the lovely colouring of a woman, black haired, blue eyed, white skinned. The rain, passing, left the mountains dark and cold. The long shadow of one of them over the country below was like the trailing beauty of a woman's hair. His hands, holding the reins, were wet, as though



that damp sweetness clung to them. How a man's hands could become entangled in a woman's hair, so that he could not escape at last or tell what the thing was that held him ! Maurice Pollen gathered up the reins and rode down into the valley which was his for the taking. No smoke showed from the rare cottages which looked as if they might be deserted. Here and there, thin cattle grazed. In the distance the sea crept into a bay and lay there shining. Under the shadow of the mountains a lake was dark and cold.

For that payment of a white rose all this was given to Maurice Pollen and his descendants in the year 1605. The lands of Ballyglare and Killorgin and Kilmore, with the mountains of Corofin and the Four Stars. And the lake that lay at the foot of one of the Stars, dark and cold, holding its secret. And the little bay into which the sea crept, to lie warming in the sun. The rightful owner of Ballyglare and Killorgin, and the mountains that stood over them, being at that moment on the Continent with the Wild Geese, there was no one to dispute the gift. (Terence O'Kelly was actually dying of wounds received in the French King's service at the time Maurice Pollen took possession of his estate ; and presently, fetching his wife and son from Devonshire, built a house for himself which he called by his own name, Pollenstown.)

The years passed and the tribute of the white rose fell into abeyance. But there still remained the tradition of it and, because of the tradition, a bush of white roses grew in the garden of Pollenstown between the fuchsias and hydrangeas which spread luxuriously to twice their normal size in this country, and it was shown to visitors who were interested in such things when that old story was told.

The rose bush was one of the earliest memories of Maurice Pollen, who was born in 1895 or thereabouts. When he had been to the War, and a good many other things had occurred to make him forget a great deal, he still remembered quite clearly all the things that had happened at Pollenstown when he was a child.

He remembered being lifted up when he was very small to touch the roses, and how the white petals had been wet and cold against his fingers. And the rose which he had touched, an over-blown one in a late Irish summer garden where it had been recently raining—as it had always been unless it was actually raining now—fell to pieces as he touched it, the petals dropping to the ground, one or two of them falling among the dark green leaves of the rose bush.

He remembered his mother coming down the garden path later, when the fuchsias were out. The deep red and purple jewelled



drops of them touched her as she went by. They too were wet from a recent shower, shining now that the sun was out lighting Corofin and the Four Stars. She was dressed in black in that memory, so that it must have been soon after his father died, and very lovely and tall and fair she had seemed to the child, like a lady out of a fairy story, and he had heard someone say in that time of which he remembered everything, that 'she was very English,' and he had resented it, although that was quite natural, seeing that she was English.

She had worried in those days about the weeds that grew in the garden as riotously as the flowers. 'You can't turn your back on them for a moment, but they'll be stealing a march on you,' old Hyland had said, looking at a patch of groundsel as though it were an adversary and an enemy. But he was suspicious of the help which Mrs. Pollen offered him, as though he feared a traitor there.

'I wouldn't like to see one of *them* coming into it, at all,' he would say darkly, and no illumination for a child listening ever lit that darkness to explain what might happen if one of *them* were to be coming into it.

'And I am greatly troubled indeed by them dogs,' he would add, finding a weapon against her and using it, as one of Mrs. Pollen's black spaniels dug a neat hole among the weeds to bury a bone.

The war between his mother and old Hyland, who adored her, went on through Maurice's childhood. He associated it with the garden where, in late August, the red-hot pokers grew high over his head and the leaves of the laurels and the crimson drops of the fuchsias were always wet and shining; and with the drenched white rose bush which was so important that it stood alone in the middle of the garden with a box hedge encircling it. Suddenly, in those memories, it was spring and the garden full of warmth and sunlight which came streaming down from the glistening tops of the mountains, and life stirring in the earth and in all the branches of the fruit trees that spread their fans against the grey wall.

Being defeated in her war with Hyland, Anne Pollen turned her attention to the village, an untidy, tumble-down collection of cottages clustering about the gate of Pollenstown, not greatly changed or improved from the smokeless cottages which Maurice Pollen had first seen when he came, bringing fear with him, sending the silence of fear before him.

Anne Pollen taught the people to cook and sew and how to keep their fowl properly and tidily, and she gave them plants and seeds



for their gardens, which they planted and sowed to please her, because she was so lovely.

When she had done, the village of Pollenstown had, in the Irish country, the ridiculous, half-ashamed look of a child with a newly scrubbed, unfamiliar face, wearing clothes belonging to someone else, which could never fit him. That was the impression of the tidy, whitewashed cottages with their strange bright gardens, past which Maurice rode, on his way home on a hunting evening.

'God bless you, ma'am,' the people said to Mrs. Pollen adoringly, and they chased the little hen that was such company and so terrible wise out of the back door when they saw the lady coming. And the little hen stood on one leg in the yard, cold and wet and miserable and greatly surprised, waiting for the door to open again, so that she might go back to her warm place under the kitchen table.

All the things that an English lady of the Manor might do, Anne Pollen did. (She might, unconsciously, have been trying to atone for the sins of her son's ancestors, those sins that had gone into the colour of the country, blood spilt and become part of it.) She distributed warm clothes for the cold weather, jerseys for the children and for the boys and men as well. When she had done, the village of Pollenstown was like an island floating somewhat uncomfortably in the wild sea of the country.

In one of those springs, the war between Hyland and Maurice's mother had ended. Hyland had gone away—a long journey, the child's nurse told him. To Cork? To Dublin? the boy persisted, trying to see Hyland with his neat, weather-stained clothes, his rosy child's face and the funny square black hat which he wore on Sundays (so that he would surely wear it on the journey) in either of those places which Maurice only knew then, himself, by repute. A very long journey, the nurse said, and said no more.

Maurice went to Winchester and came home for the holidays. The things he came back to—from Winchester with its grey, quiet school buildings and the meadows about it—were the wet sweet smell of the turf smoke drenching everything, the dark beauty of the mountains, the rolling green turf below them, which was all water when one walked on it, the brown neat ricks of the turf against the green, the white cottages, gold thatched, in amethyst light. The whole, a radiance, into which he slipped, as though he swam in lovely water. Then the outside car, meeting him at the station with cushions smelling of damp and age and protruding their stuffing of horse hair, and the wet roads reflecting the wet skies.



The long avenue and the sound the wheels made on it, and the quick noise of the horse's hoofs, the turn out of the woods to the place from which the house was first visible—shining because it had been raining and now the sun was out—the river with all the rich brownness of the bog in it, that ran close to the house, making a noise that was in a boy's sleep as it had been in the long nights of a child. And the talk of the man who drove the car, as incessant as the wind and rain, talk of hunting days in that smooth green country that lay so unexpectedly beyond the gap in the hills, of how the snipe were, out on the bog, of something the horse had done to himself and how Mullins in the village had a horse for Master Maurice if he wanted it. A horse that couldn't make a mistake if he tried. The swing round then, as only an outside car can swing, to the hall door. Two or three dogs on the top of the steps, barking until they were sure who came, when they would wriggle towards him with stiff yelps of welcome, keeping a certain reserve even in this, since all their dogs' memories of Maurice were not peaceful or pleasant.

The hall door kept the same expression all these years. It was built very strongly as if for some purpose—but it must have forgotten its original purpose for ever since Maurice could remember it had stood open all day and often all night. This did not surprise anyone, even though, through it, with the dining-room door open too, the gleam of the silver on the sideboard could be seen against the brown panelled walls. *Them* that would come, Maurice knew (so he had heard it said perhaps, and now thought it), wouldn't be coming after silver and it wasn't a door that would stop them.

Knowing that, with the certainty which alone belongs to knowledge acquired in childhood, before uncertainty has ever been dreamed of, he was not greatly surprised on a summer morning not long after his return from the War, when he descended the stairs, to find the hall full of sunlight and of men.

Two, moving into the doorway, shut out some of the sun. He could see, behind them, like a blue curtain hanging in lovely folds, Corofin and the Four Stars. Two more straightened themselves from the wooden box seat that held an assortment of tennis racquets, dog-collars and whips, old tennis balls, smelling as musty as a memory of last year, which is too long ago and yet not long enough. (There is no glamour about last year, too close for the gold mist to lie on it yet.) Other things the box held, seeming inexhaustible; tattered books of music, thin carriage rugs smelling of rain and wind and the turf smoke blown on that wind, gramophone records.



One of the men straightened himself with two pieces of a record in his hand.

'It was on the top of the box when we opened it,' he said reproachfully. 'And now it's broken, which is a pity.'

'We were playing it yesterday,' Maurice Pollen said, and he had come too lately from the War to like the muzzles of so many revolvers turned his way. Some of them moved a little—or did he imagine that? And he wondered what practice their holders had had. And he felt frightened and rather sick, remembering, as though it were now something lost for ever, the sunlight in the hall yesterday and the peace of it, and how it had been even in the faded drawing-room where he had played this gramophone with Molly Lavington.

'A pity you broke that,' he said and was surprised, hearing his own voice, as though he had believed that lost too, like yesterday and the peaceful sunlight. 'It's the best of the lot.'

'A pity indeed,' the man who had broken it agreed with him, turning the others in his hand and reading the names of them. 'You shouldn't have left them on the box where anyone'd knock them down and they opening it. But you've some good tunes here,' and he handled one lovingly, his eyes wandering in search of a possible gramophone.

'We want guns,' someone else said. It was the leader. Now, nothing else might have been said but that. All the rest was as far away as yesterday when Maurice had played the gramophone with Molly Lavington. 'Tell us where you have them hid. You might as well, for we'll find them. We know what you've got.'

Maurice looked over the man's head for a moment. He had not realised before that he was standing on the last step of the stairs. It gave him an advantage. Also it made him a better target. There was a revolver level with his chest. Over by the door a man stood watching him. He had a mask over half his face, but his mouth and chin were visible. Maurice looked into his eyes where the holes were cut in the mask. The man nodded his head very swiftly as though Maurice had asked a question and he answered it.

'This way then,' Maurice said. He thought of his mother upstairs and the three dogs who slept in her room. A mercy they slept in her room, with the door closed. 'This way then,' he said, suddenly in a hurry.

He went out on to the steps and they followed him, one delaying for a moment to pick up a gramophone record and look at it regretfully. He saw the mountains in the sunlight.



'I had thought of shooting grouse,' he said. 'Over there . . . to-morrow.'

'Maybe if you wanted the loan of a gun for a day's shooting,' a voice said in his ear, 'Master Maurice, and you were to let me know. . . .'

He showed them where the guns were, hidden in the loft above the stables. They dug them out with a great rustling of hay, like dogs searching for rats. When they had done, the air was full of haydust and a faint musty smell of it. Maurice coughed in it, listening to the movement of his horses below. He hoped to God they wouldn't think of taking them one of these days. The guns he should have given up before, and he would have done so but for that hunger he had had for another day's shooting on Corofin.

They went away quietly. The yard that was, as a rule, so full of life, was empty. Not a groom to be seen, not a stable-boy. The usually open sociable door of the kitchen, through which there was incessant friendly communication with the yard, showed a closed, blank face. How long, Maurice wondered, looking suddenly on as foreign a land as another Maurice Pollen had looked, when he reined in his horse in that gap between the hills, had they known about the raid before he did?

The raiders went out between the tall grey gate-posts that threw shadows in the morning sunlight. Again the voice said in his ear: 'If you should want a loan of it . . . just for a day, any time, Master Maurice. . . .'

But how long, he wondered, would he keep the gun if he went shooting with it?

By this time the 50,000 acres had dwindled. Corofin and the Four Stars (so well named when the sun lit them or the moon shone on them) had gone, long ago, as had Ballyglare and Killorgin. They had been taken under various land acts and divided up among the descendants of their original owners. There remained the lands of Kilmore on which Pollenstown was built, and the owner of Pollenstown might shoot where he would, by favour.

That winter, having had bad luck with his horses, he accepted a mount from Mullins, the shopkeeper in the local town, who had often mounted him when he was a boy. A horse that couldn't make a mistake if he was to try, his owner said fervently, as he had said before.

Maurice did not speak of a memory he had of himself at the bottom of a ditch, and of a horse lying on him that couldn't make a mistake.



'Maybe I might make one though,' he said, surveying the lean chestnut, still rough, with a wild mane and tail. But 'His father was in the Book,' Mullins said, looking at the raw-boned animal lovingly. There was a faint sickness in the joy, Maurice felt. Where would he end the day with the horse whose father was in the Book and who looked as if he might carry him to the other side of Corofin and the Four Stars?

Mullins ended the day beside him, and as they rode home in a sweet damp twilight, into a sky where the grey cloud broke to a lake of gold, he thrust his horse easily up against his stable companion.

'You never wanted the gun after all, Master Maurice.'

'Sure I wouldn't have kept it long,' Maurice said . . . or asked, staring into that lake of gold, his own face drenched in the overflowing water of it.

'That's true indeed,' Mullins agreed softly.

Maurice rode the chestnut in a Point-to-Point that spring.

'Pollenstown I've called him if you don't mind.' Mullins conveyed a perfect compliment. 'Sure who would ride him but a Pollen!'

So Maurice rode a horse called Pollenstown, whose sire was in the Book, in the Farmers' Race, on a day of blue sky and white clouds and gold gorse lighting the country like a thousand lamps. The course was in that hunting country the other side of the wall of mountains, the country through which Maurice Pollen had ridden with his soldiers, leaving the burning villages and dying people behind him. (To the end of his days he had remembered—after all he had never been able to forget—the clutching of those small hands, the trailing beauty of a woman's hair.)

The dark hedges, with the sun on them, as the survivors of a gallant company went through them at a jump, were alive with spring. As they came up to the winning-post, the spring wind in the riders' silk making a noise like sails, the green yellow turf an unrolling carpet rose to a beautiful curve, beyond which, over the lower hills, Maurice could see the blue shapes of Corofin and the Four Stars.

'And, my God,' Mullins said, holding the chestnut's rein and leading him in, 'I didn't know you could ride like that. It's a great day for Pollenstown.'

Maurice rode through a dark cheering crowd in which he recognised a face. That of the leader who had come for the guns. He was cheering with a half-unwilling air. Maurice could not guess



that his name was O'Kelly and that he felt a pride in Pollenstown's success that had something personal in it, something affectionate and antagonistic at once, like the bitter love that is only between relatives and friends who are too close for the easiness of indifference.

He saw that face again on an October night, when a knocking came at the door, taking none of them by surprise.

'It's a good thing,' Anne Pollen said, 'that we got the Romneys away . . . and some of the other things.' She looked round the room a little helplessly and began then to make a collection of things of no value at all.

Maurice, in the hall, was thinking that the door was closed and that that was a strange thing to happen at Pollenstown, even on an autumn night. He opened it, and, with the men who entered, there came in the wild soft wind to which he had turned his face shooting or hunting, the wind with the rain in it and the smell of wet turf smoke that came from Corofin and the Four Stars. And it was raining.

'Terrible weather,' the leader remarked. The rain glistened on his clothes and ran down his face. He held his revolver in his hand, but he did not lift it. 'I am sorry about this, Mr. Pollen,' he said, and stood looking about him with an odd expression in his eyes. For an ancestor of his, named Terence O'Kelly, had died abroad fighting for a French King, and the land on which this house was built, at least, might have been his. 'But we have orders.'

He listened for a moment. Maurice Pollen heard the wind blowing across the fields which he knew, hunting them, the bog and mountains he knew, shooting them, the course they had made for the Point-to-Point last spring. With the wind he heard a crying. It was the time when the wild geese flew back to Ireland.

'You rode damned well,' the leader said, staring at him as though they had communicated their thoughts to each other. 'You knew how to save him. I watched you. It was your riding that won the race for Mullins. Not everyone'd have got that out of the chestnut.' And then he remembered. 'We can give you a quarter of an hour maybe, perhaps more. We're before our time.'

He stared at his watch, disconcerted by this over-punctuality. They had come through the garden which bore the mark of their passing. They had broken down the fuchsias in the dark and had stumbled into a rose bush on which a few chilly late white roses glimmered faintly. Pushing away the branches in their haste, they



had broken some of them down and the petals were scattered in the rain.

'In that case,' Maurice said, 'you might have a drink.' He led the way into the dining-room and they followed him. It was the last time he would play host in this room and there was a suitability in the way he played it and in the last guest he was to entertain.

'It's a terrible cold night,' one of the raiders remarked politely. 'Yes,' Maurice agreed. Once before he had felt as cold as this—on a firing-party to bury his best friend during the War. Two of the men stood by what was left of the fire, warming themselves. Maurice turned up the lamp and lit the candles, and saw the light on the jerseys worn by those two boys standing on the hearthrug under the blank space from which one of the Romneys had been taken away. He remembered the blue knitting wool slipping through his mother's white fingers, the click and flash of her needles.

'A terrible cold night indeed, Master Maurice.' He shivered as though the jersey gave him little warmth after all.

'Here's to your next ride, Mr. Pollen,' said Terence O'Kelly, lifting his glass. 'I'd put my last penny on you . . .'

He put his glass down and glanced at the clock on the chimney-piece. Such a wise kind face the clock had had in Maurice's childhood, looking at a child out of the dim shadows of this room. The hands pointed to half-past nine and it was never again to strike ten o'clock.

'We'll have to hurry,' he said, and stood still for a moment, listening. There was no sound except the ticking of the clock, which seemed louder now than Maurice ever remembered it, and the rain against the windows, and a crying—perhaps—of wild geese. 'We can help you to save some of the things. This now,'—he lifted the Waterford glass decanter in his hand and under the lamp the blue light showed in it.

That night Pollenstown lit a torch for the country-side, which could be seen from Corofin and the Four Stars. The soft wet wind that had come in through the opening door fanned the flames as if it loved them. Dark figures of men slipping away across the lawn threw grotesque shadows. One of them stood still, looking back, and his shadow waited with him.

'I didn't think it'd burn so well,' he murmured, and turned away to follow the others. They went as they had come, through the garden where a bush of white chilly roses, in that strange light, was now warmed to crimson and gold.



## TENNYSON PAPERS.

### I. ALFRED'S FATHER.

BY CHARLES TENNYSON.

THE history of the Tennyson family is a strange one. For 300 or 400 years it can be traced through a line of small freeholders, or yeoman farmers in Holderness, north of the Humber, producing no man of eminence except Thomas Tenison, whose parents migrated to Cambridgeshire and who became Archbishop of Canterbury, founded a famous Grammar School and preached Nell Gwyn's funeral sermon. Some time in the seventeenth century property in North Lincolnshire was added to the family possessions, and in the middle of the eighteenth century Michael Tennyson, a surgeon practising at Market Rasen, laid the foundation of an ampler fortune for the family by marrying the heiress of the ancient house of Clayton, which owned large estates in and about Grimsby.

His son, George Clayton Tennyson, became a successful lawyer, threw himself into the development of the Grimsby Docks, married a daughter of the Turner family, which had estates at Caister, and in the course of a long and active life made himself a large land-owner and a very important person in the county. Among other estates which he acquired was that of Bayons Manor, which had at one time belonged to the Barons d'Eyncourt.

He had two sons, the eldest, called by the same names as himself, George Clayton, born in 1778, and the second, three years younger, called Charles.

The elder son became Rector of Somersby, father of the poet Alfred Tennyson, the second, the founder of the well-known family of Tennyson d'Eyncourt of Bayons Manor.

Tradition regarding George Clayton Tennyson, the elder, is scanty. He was evidently a man of strong personality, great energy and dominating will, so much is evident from the facts of his career and from the very beautiful portrait of him by Sir T. Lawrence, which hangs at Bayons. But he seems to have had none of the characteristics which the world has since come to associate with the name of Tennyson. He was fair haired, fresh complexioned, alert, practical and with no interest at all in literature



or poetry. The portraits of his wife show her as of dark complexion and aquiline features, and tradition credits her with poetic tastes, so it is probably from her that the characteristics of later generations of Tennyson descend. Some element of romance her husband had in his composition, for he conceived the idea of reviving in his descendants the glories of the ancient family of d'Eyncourt, whose estate at Bayons he had purchased and from whom he claimed descent through his mother, the Clayton heiress. This desire had important results. He seems to have formed the impression that his eldest son, the poet's father, was not fitted to become the founder of a great county family, and that the second son who had, before his father's death in 1835, become a Member of Parliament and a Privy Councillor, was better qualified for the part.

It is generally said (and Hallam, Lord Tennyson, in his *Memoir* of the poet uses the expression) that George Tennyson, 'the old man of the Wolds,' as his grandchildren used to call him, 'disinherited' his elder son. This is not a fair description. The will by which George Tennyson finally disposed of his property was not made till 1835, after the death of his elder son, who predeceased his father by four years, but I have no doubt that it carried out intentions previously decided on. By this will he left to Charles all the properties which he had acquired himself—including his Manors at Bayons, Tealby, Welton, Usselby, Morton and Helmswell, and lands at Ludford Magna and Ludford Parva, Market Rasen, Middle Rasen, Osgodby and Kirby, and all his residuary personalty, live and dead stock, etc. To George's eldest son, Frederick, he left his lands at Grimsby, Clea and Cleethorpes, and he made also provision to the value probably of about £3,000 apiece, for the rest of George's large family. From this it is clear that there was no question of disinheriting the elder branch, though, on the other hand, Dr. Tennyson was not treated as the elder son would in those times have expected to be treated. The preference given to the younger son was further emphasised by the fact that the father made his inheritance of the lands and manors in Usselby, Morton and Helmswell dependent on his adopting the name of d'Eyncourt.

It seems certain that the 'old man of the Wolds' decided, while both his sons were still young, to give the younger this preferential position. He was sent to Eton, while the elder brother went to be educated by the Rev. Mr. Hutchinson of Holywell, Huntingdonshire. This was not owing to any lack of ability on the



part of George Tennyson, for he passed on to St. John's College, Cambridge, where, in 1797, he gained a Duckett scholarship. One of these scholarships was reserved for men born in Holderness, and though George appears to have been born at Market Rasen, the fact that the family had property in Holderness was probably thought a sufficient qualification.

Of George Tennyson's school and college life practically nothing is known. Lewis Carroll records having met a Canon Grey, who had been at school with him and remembered his writing his school translations in rhyme, an early evidence of a poetic gift to which I shall refer later. He himself in after life used to lament that he had not been sent to Eton, where he thought he would have acquired a greater polish and fluency in versification. The only traditions of his Cambridge career are of a different kind and suggest a certain wildness in the future rector of Somersby.

The poet used to tell how his father once shot (presumably with a pistol) through one of the windows of Trinity College Chapel, a feat which created some stir, for the College authorities offered a reward for the discovery of the culprit, who, however, managed to escape detection. On another occasion young Tennyson rescued the Proctor from a disorderly mob of Townsmen. For this he had a long imposition given him because he had been with the mob. The next day he travelled out of Cambridge with the Proctor in a coach and passed such a jovial time with him that he heard no more of the imposition.

His father had apparently decided by the time that young George Tennyson had left Cambridge that he was not to fill the ordinary place of an elder son. This decision caused something of a scandal in the county. The Heneage of the period said to the stern father, over their port one evening, 'Tennyson, if you do this, you will certainly be damned, you will indeed,' so sacred were the rights of primogeniture held in eighteenth-century Lincolnshire. But the old man of the Wolds was not to be shaken, and he decided that his elder son must go into the Church, a vocation for which the poor boy felt himself very imperfectly suited. Before being ordained, however, he was sent for a tour on the Continent. Here a strange adventure befell him; so strange that one would hardly believe it, were it not recorded fully in the official life of the poet. In the course of his tour and shortly after the assassination of the Emperor Paul of Russia, he visited St. Petersburg, where Lord St. Helens, a former member of St. John's College, was British



Ambassador. Lord St. Helens invited him to dine, and in the course of dinner young Tennyson said, across a Russian, to his host, 'It is perfectly well known in England who murdered the Emperor Paul; it was Count So-and-So.' Whereat a dead silence fell on the company. After dinner Lord St. Helens called George Tennyson aside and said, 'Ride for your life from this city; the man across whom you were speaking to me was the Count So-and-So whom you accused of murdering the Emperor Paul.' Tennyson took horse and rode through Russia, till he came to the Crimea, where he fell ill. He became delirious and remembered the wild country-people dancing round his bed with magical incantations. Once in every three months an English courier passed through this village where he lay ill, and as he passed through the village blew a horn. It all depended on George Tennyson's hearing this horn whether he could escape from Russia, for he had no money. In his delirium he would perpetually start up agonised lest he had missed it. At last the courier came, the horn was blown and he heard the sound, and applied to the courier to take him. The courier agreed and Tennyson journeyed with him. He was a drunken fellow and dropped all his despatches on the road. Tennyson picked them up but did not say that he had done so. The courier was in despair, and at last Tennyson gave them to him with a warning that he must not be drunken in future. At one frontier town the sentries had barred the gates because it was late at night. The courier, not to be daunted, shouted out, 'Le duc de York.' An immediate unbarring ensued, and the sentinels all sprang to attention, and saluted with deference. So, after less drunkenness on the part of the courier and many adventures, they managed to reach England.

The date of this adventure can be definitely established (though the time occupied by the hero's wandering is probably exaggerated in the printed story), for Lord St. Helens went on his last mission to St. Petersburg in April, 1801, to congratulate the Czar Alexander on his accession to the throne, the Emperor Paul having been assassinated on March 24.

George Tennyson was ordained Deacon on May 31, 1801. His visit to St. Petersburg was, therefore, presumably in April of that year.

This strange tale seems to confirm the existence of a strain of wildness in George Tennyson's temperament, and it is remarkable that other violent adventures befell him, at the end of his life, when he again visited the Continent, as I shall describe in due course.



Now, however, he settled down to the humdrum life of a country parson. He was ordained a Priest on December 19, 1802, and instituted Rector of Benniworth two days later.

That something of the old spirit survived in him is suggested by a curious poem which I have found in one of his notebooks—a singular composition (according to modern ideas) for the rector of a country parish. This poem is prefaced with the following introduction :

‘ A SUBLIME ODE

‘ in two parts, on Wintry Weather, with moral inferences in imitation of that delectable and heaven born Author and Poet Mr. Hervey : concluding with a sublime address to young and old, Dames and Misses, Messrs and Youths just breeched, and lastly, to complete the climax, to the illustrious Sovereign who now sways the Sceptre of these realms King George the Third : in which a method of deriving consolation for the follies and eccentricities of the Heir apparent is humbly submitted to the Royal Ears ; the whole concluding with the most beautiful and sublime similies that have ever met the eye of a candid and judicious public.’

The fragment is wittily and almost savagely written ; it is also of interest for its freedom of expression. It is not actually signed by Dr. Tennyson but is written out entirely in his hand and indexed without any suggestion that it is not his work.

The first part has little interest, being apparently a parody of some forgotten poetaster.

The second part relates to the doings of the Prince of Wales and seems to have been written about 1805-6 at a time when the first Commission of Enquiry into the conduct of the Princess was instituted, and when the Prince, supported in some degree by his mother, was disputing with the King regarding the education of his unfortunate daughter and doing his best to have her removed from the state and public dignity which should have been accorded to his heiress-apparent. The following stanzas occur in the second part :

18.

Young and old, robust and feeble,  
Learn to moralize apace,  
Ye whose bass is turned to treble,  
Ye whose squeak is not yet bass,



## 19.

Dames, desert your pins and laces,  
Ribbands, kerchiefs, capes and rings,  
And deduce sententious phrases  
E'en from mean and trivial things.

## 20.

Girls, desert your childish gewgaws  
Baby Houses, Dolls and Frocks,  
Hearken to my weighty new saws  
Moralize, nor care who mocks.

## 21.

Men who dream of fame or riches  
Ponder well the things I say,  
Youths who just are cloath'd in Breeches  
Spurn your Tops nor heed your play.

## 22.

Thou enthron'd in earthly splendor,  
George, with Charlotte by thy side,  
Who, of faith august Defender,  
Rul'st o'er nations far and wide.

## 23.

Prince, with regal robe invested,  
Hearken to my moral lay,  
Then of earthly power divested  
Thou shalt reign in endless day.

## 24.

What tho' giddy sons perplex thee,  
Shake their elbows drink and wh—,  
What tho' wanton Jersey vex thee,  
Veteran Fitzherbert more?

## 25.

What tho' of his wife and daughter  
England's hope forgetful prove,  
And by base contrivance sought her  
Life, who ought to be his love?



## 26.

What tho' Brunswick's Issue ducal  
Be neglected and reviled,  
And thy son to make us puke all  
Wish't to bastardise his child ?

## 27.

What tho' still the jaundiced Charlotte  
Stimulate her impious son  
Yet to stigmatise as harlot  
One as spotless as the sun ?

## 28.

What tho' he in tricks detected  
From Newmarket was kicked off,  
And unworthily rejected  
Even of fools and knaves the scoff ?

## 29.

Yet come quickly, learn my Science  
And, though he be mad and vile,  
Thou to Grief shall bid defiance  
And midst woes look up and smile.

On the 6th of August, 1805, George Tennyson married Elizabeth Fytche, daughter of a former vicar of Louth and niece of a Bishop of Lincoln. In the same year he took his M.A. degree. On December 31, 1806, he was instituted Rector of Somersby and of Bag Enderby, though he did not move into the old Rectory at Somersby till 1808. In 1813 he took the degree of Doctor of Civil Law and thereafter was generally known as Dr. Tennyson. Two years later he added to his other benefices the vicarage of St. Mary and St. James' at Grimsby.

None of these benefices seem to have been actually within the gift of George Tennyson the elder, but they were presumably obtained by him for his elder son as some compensation for his intended settlement of the major part of his estates on the younger son, Charles.

There is no doubt that Dr. Tennyson felt keenly the preference given to his younger brother and that he allowed his position to prey upon his mind and to intensify moods of depression and irritability, a tendency to which was inherited by the poet and his



brothers. 'We Tennysons are all black-blooded,' Alfred Tennyson used to say, and the phrase might well have been applied to the Doctor. So intense and violent were these moods of his father that Alfred, as a child, used often to run out into the night in utter misery and cast himself weeping down amongst the tombstones. When Dr. Tennyson died, his second son wrote of him as one 'whose soul had been daily racked by bitter fancies and tossed about by strong troubles.' But though his treatment at the hands of his father may have been the cause of many of these 'bitter fancies,' I do not think that the Doctor thought it altogether a matter for resentment—indeed he may possibly have shared his father's views as to his unsuitability for the rôle of a country magnate.

He remained on friendly terms with his younger brother, who wrote on hearing the news of his death :

'This morning's post brought me the afflicting news from Somersby. You will guess my feelings, for you know that I valued my dear brother for his thousand admirable qualities of heart, which would have contributed to his own happiness and that of those around him, if he had not given way to failings arising out of a nervous temperament. I knew him to be excellent in intention, to be naturally full of worth and goodness, and I respected and loved him. I believe he also depended on my fraternal feelings towards him, and I will, as far as I can, endeavour to justify his good opinion of me. . . .'

The Doctor's moods of depression were no doubt due in part to some physical cause. He seems to have suffered from intermittent bouts of extreme lethargy, sometimes lying in bed till three or four in the afternoon, even when on visits to such friends as Mr. Rawnsley, the Rector of Halton Holgate. This characteristic reappeared very strongly in some of his children, and I think Alfred suffered from it in his early manhood.

Another peculiarity of the Doctor which descended to his children was his extreme absent-mindedness. It is told of him that, going to call one day upon a neighbour, he was wholly unable, when the door was opened to him, to remember his own name, and was forced to tell the servant that he had just remembered another engagement in the neighbourhood and would return later. Happily for him he shortly afterwards met a friend, who exclaimed, 'Hullo, Tennyson, how are you ?' upon which the Doctor cried with delight, 'Why, "Tennyson," of course, that's it,' and was able to return and pay his call. This reminds one of the story that when Alfred was spending



his honeymoon in a friend's house in the Lake country it was found necessary to paint the garden gate a brilliant white, to prevent his walking past it in the fits of abstraction which often came upon him.

Another characteristic, due perhaps to the same cause, was a certain oddity of manner. Alfred used to imitate his way of reading verse 25 of the 68th Psalm. 'The singers go before, the minstrels follow after; in the midst are the damsels playing on the timbrels.' In pronouncing the close of this verse the Doctor used to give a rapid twiddle with his fingers, much as if he were running them over the keys of a piano, while his voice would rise at the word 'damsels' and fall away with an almost negligent cadence to the close of the sentence.

But in spite of his black-bloodedness and oddity, he was a man of much charm and vivacity, whose society was greatly sought in the neighbourhood. In 1866 old Dr. Waite, who had been Headmaster of the school at Louth to which the elder Tennyson boys went for a few years, wrote, with all a pedagogue's pomposity, to the poet: 'Some 60 years ago I have laughed and disputed, disputed and laughed with your talented father, who was never so happy as when engaged in logomachy and whose good temper would never admit of acerbity.'

The tradition of his conversational powers long survived in the barristers' mess at the neighbouring Assize town of Spilsby.

He was, moreover, an admirable Greek and Latin scholar and could read Syriac, Hebrew and several modern languages. He was a good musician, playing excellently upon the harp, and was also deeply interested in architecture and painting. As is well known, he designed the curious Gothic Hall, which he and his servant, Horlins, built at Somersby to accommodate his increasing family, and executed carvings on the mantelpiece and over the windows himself.

He collected a considerable number of quite tolerable old masters on his visits to Italy, and amongst his papers I have found a MS. treatise on oil painting covering 44 pages and followed by a list of famous painters of all countries, including over 200 names, with the dates of their births and deaths and occasional notes. The same notebook contains an elaborate treatise on bookbinding, illustrated with fine pen drawings by the Doctor himself, who used to bind with his own hands the MS. books used by Alfred during the Somersby period.

There are also historical notes, one series being on Queen Mary,



underneath which is written in Dr. Tennyson's hand the concise summary,

'a sad, bloody devil.'

Other pages contain mathematical problems, illustrations of such things as a new method of hanging curtains, drawings of figures and faces, some very well done, sketches of proposed buildings, etc.

His taste in books was that of a connoisseur and in the early days of his married life he bought extensively, with an especial fondness for fine sixteenth- and seventeenth-century folio editions of classical authors, many of which he obtained at the sale in 1806 of the library of Bennet Langton, of Langton Hall, the friend of Dr. Johnson, who had succeeded him as Professor of Ancient Literature to the Royal Academy and died in 1801. It is characteristic that when Alfred, at the age of seven, went away to school at Louth, he was given a Second Edition of *Paradise Lost*.

Moreover, the Doctor had undoubtedly considerable imagination and poetic power. There are a number of poems amongst his papers and I will quote two which illustrate the range of his capacity. The first is conventional in style and employs the metre of Spenser's *Faerie Queene*. The choice of subject—'The Wandering Jew'—and the harsh and gloomy tone of its treatment are characteristic of the Rector's black-blooded mood.

#### THE WANDERING JEW

##### 1.

O Stranger, why enquire the hapless fate  
Of one most sorely scath'd by power supreme?  
My guilt past utterance why should I relate  
Or tale of Woe, will bid thine eyelids stream  
With pity's kindly drops—my fortunes teem  
With incidents so horrible and rare  
That thou, incredulous, perchance may'st deem  
Reason divested of her throne, and Care  
And Age to have installed second childhood there.

##### 2.

And yet this stedfast eye no sign betrays  
Of intellectual frenzy or decay,  
My memory is firm and tells of days  
In dark oblivion long pass'd away;



When Rome submitted to Augustus' sway  
 I first drew breath, and oh! that in my spring  
 The bud of life had withered for aye;  
 Oh! that e'en now at last, oh heavenly king,  
 Thou would'st in mercy deign to snap this vital string.

## 3.

Ah! not thro' ignorance I sinn'd but pride;  
 I bow before thy righteous judgments, Lord!  
 I saw thy works and yet thy power denied  
 Contemn'd thy threat'nings and dispis'd thy word;  
 Thy lowly guise my carnal heart abhorr'd;  
 O yet at last revoke thy fearful doom.  
 Let Mercy temper judgment, let thy sword  
 Of Vengeance slumber, and the silent tomb  
 This ever sleepless eye and withered heart enwomb.

## 4.

How vain the prayer! I bear a charmed life,  
 I tarry till he comes; such the decree  
 Of him who sav'd the world, and neither knife,  
 Rope, rack, nor pos'nous herb, nor malady,  
 Fire, earth, nor air can ever set me free;  
 When blood and water issued from his side  
 'Twas I who pierc'd him on the fatal tree,  
 And therefore now a wretched deicide,  
 Deathless and vagabond, I wander far and wide,

## 5.

And on my brow an ever-burning spear,  
 Fed by the self-renew'd and anguished brain,  
 Adown these furrow'd cheeks the scalding tear  
 Compels, and bids me woefully complain;  
 Ah! who can live in never-ending pain?  
 Yet till the great Archangel's trump shall call  
 The dead to judgment, must I still sustain  
 This fiery torment; till this earthly ball,  
 Enwrapt by flames shall shrivel like a parched scroll.

## 6.

Ye mortals, insects of life's little day  
 Your brief and puny sorrows why deplore?  
 Awhile ye wanton in the sultry ray  
 And die what time bright Hesper doth restore



The evening grey—soon is your mingled skein  
 Unwound by Destiny's resistless power  
 And pitying Death divides the thread in twain—  
 But I in this dark world for ever must remain.

More remarkable are some lines which recall the well-known 'Tom of Bedlam' poems, a style of composition which was apparently popular in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Dr. Tennyson was probably familiar with examples quoted in Percy's *Reliques* (1765) and in Ritson's *Ancient Songs* (1790). It is just possible that these lines are not the original work of Dr. Tennyson, but merely a transcription. I cannot, however, trace them to any other source and they occur in a notebook all the remaining contents of which are clearly Dr. Tennyson's own compositions. They appear therefore to be an exercise by him in the manner of the traditional poems.

It is interesting to note that a copy of the lines in the handwriting of Alfred Tennyson (and I think not in a very early hand) was sold at Sotheby's a short time ago, but I do not think they are Alfred's work.

## SONG.

I am mad Tom, I know it  
 And sometimes I am furious,  
 But I am wise and rule the skies  
 Orion, Sol, Arcturus.

What tho' Folks point, I'm wiser  
 Than e'er was mortal found,  
 I rule the moon in her high noon  
 And whirl the planets round.

I'll climb those lofty mountains  
 And there I'll fight the gypsies,  
 I'll play at bowls with the sun and moon  
 And kick them to eclipses.

I'll climb those lofty mountains  
 In spite of wind and weather,  
 I'll tear the rainbow from the skies  
 And splice both ends together.

What tho' I'm poor, I'll marry  
 And then poor Tom will sing,  
 For Saturn rolls by my command  
 And I'll marry with his ring.



I have no dirty acres  
 To settle on my love,  
 But the flaming fields of space are mine  
 And the canopy above.

With heaven's studded concave  
 I'll bind her forehead fair,  
 Her eyes shall be the northern light  
 And a comet's tail her hair.

Oh then I'll breed a riot  
 And be a merry loon,  
 With mountains I'll at ninepins play  
 And trundle with the moon.

All this suggests a man of considerable imagination, strong personality, active mind and wide interests, who, in spite of his father's lack of confidence, had a touch of the grand style about him.

In addition Dr. Tennyson was of commanding physique, over six feet in height, swarthy, broad and athletic. 'What a clip he used to goa between they churches of Somersby and Bag Enderby,' said the old rat-catcher of Somersby, years after the Doctor and all his family had left the parish for ever. He had, moreover, what was characteristic later of Alfred and his brothers, a magnificent voice, deep, strong and musical.

That he had a sense of humour and a somewhat uncanonical way with him is suggested by the following letter addressed to his friend, the Rev. T. H. Rawnsley of Halton, who had apparently asked him to dine and meet a lady visitor:

*Tuesday 28th, 1826.*

DEAR RAWNSLEY,—

In your not having come to see me for so many months, when you have little or nothing to do but warm your shins over the fire while I, unfortunately, am frozen or rather suffocated with Greek and Latin, I consider myself as not only slighted but spifflicated. You deserve that I should take no notice of your letter whatever, but I will comply with your invitation partly to be introduced to the agreeable and clever lady, but more especially to have the pleasure of seeing Mrs. Rawnsley, whom you may rest assured, I value considerably more than I do you. Mrs. T. is obliged by your



invitation, but the weather is too damp and hazy, Mr. Noah—so I remain your patriarchship's neglected servant,

G. C. TENNYSON.

In a postscript he adds :

P.S. How the devil do you expect that people are to get up at seven o'clock in the morning to answer your notes ? However, I have not kept your Ganymede waiting.

Most important of all, Dr. Tennyson had a real enthusiasm for literature and an enquiring and cultivated mind. His elder children were mainly educated by him, and the range of reading and wide knowledge displayed in such boyish works as Alfred's *The Devil and the Lady* (published by Macmillan & Co. in February, 1930) and the *Poems by Two Brothers* show that, though they may have found him alarming at times, he was able to inspire them with his own enthusiasm and take an intimate part in their intellectual development.

The well-known lines in the poem 'To J. S.'

'Once through my own door Death did pass  
One went, who never hath returned,' etc.

show that Alfred had a deep and true love for him. One of the poet's earliest Latin classics is inscribed in his own hand 'Ex dono patris amicissimi' and in one of his boyish translations of Claudian's *Rape of Proserpine* (*Unpublished Early Poems of Alfred Tennyson*—Macmillan & Co., 1932) he rendered 'conjugis-illecebras aut nomen dulce parentis' by 'a consort's or a father's dearer name.' It would not have been surprising to find Alfred writing 'a mother's dearer name,' for Elizabeth Tennyson was clearly a woman of exceptional goodness and charm. Fitzgerald wrote of her years afterwards as 'one of the most innocent and tenderhearted ladies I ever saw,' and Alfred depicted her in well-known passages in his early poem 'Isabel' and in the 'Princess.'

For the rest, the very scanty tradition which survives of Elizabeth Tennyson gives a vivid and appealing picture. We read of her being pulled about the Somersby country-side in a basket chair by her tall sons, or by a huge dog, which village tradition in after years credited with hooves, and which, when the weather was hot, would lie down in the road refusing to proceed until the spirit moved him. On these expeditions she would read aloud from Mrs.



Hemans and Beatties Calendar, and there is no doubt that her sons owed much to her encouragement and enthusiastic belief in their powers. Another Somersby tradition tells that the country lads used to bring their dogs and beat them beneath her window, in the certain hope that she would bribe them with money to desist. To her tender-heartedness may also be ascribed a disposition to be easily moved to tears, and it is told that at High Beech, Epping, whither the family went from Somersby, Alfred would sometimes stride up and down her room, shouting with humorous ferocity, 'Dam your eyes, mother, dam your eyes,' an exhortation which never failed of its effect. Then we hear of her in old age at Cheltenham, announcing with a sublime yet childlike pride to her fellow travellers in the omnibus, 'It may perhaps interest you to know that I am the mother of the Laureate.' Later still, it is told of her that one of her daughters ventured, under cover of her mother's deafness (she being then nearly eighty), to mention the many offers of marriage which she had received in the far-off days in Lincolnshire, giving the number as twenty-four. 'No, my dear, twenty-five,' interrupted Mrs. Tennyson, suddenly and emphatically. From all this, one gets the impression of a profound and impregnable simplicity. That simplicity also characterised her deep religious faith, which (strange as this may seem to a free-thinking generation) caused her to suffer no little apprehension from the tendency of many of Alfred's poems, and to write him such letters as the following—dated Jan., 1860, just after the publication of the first volume of the *Idylls* :

'DEAREST ALLY,—

'I received a nice kind note from Alan Ker a short time since, which I now enclose, thinking it will give thee pleasure to know what he says about thy last beautiful and interesting poems. It does indeed (as he supposes it would) give me the purest satisfaction to notice that a spirit of Christianity is perceptible through the whole volume. It gladdens my heart also to perceive that Alan seems to estimate it greatly on that account. O dearest Ally, how fervently I have prayed for years that our merciful Redeemer would intercede with our Heavenly Father, to grant thee His Holy Spirit, to urge thee to employ the talents He has given thee, by taking every opportunity of endeavouring to impress the precepts of His Holy Word on the mind of others. My beloved son, words are too feeble to express the joy of my heart in perceiving that thou art earnestly endeavouring to do so. Dearest Ally, there is nothing for



a moment to be compared to the favour of God : I need not ask thee if thou art of the same opinion. The writings are a convincing proof that thou art. My beloved child, when our Heavenly Father summons us hence, may we meet, and all that are dear to us, in that blessed state where sorrow is unknown, never more to be separated.'

As Elizabeth Tennyson's epitaph I may quote a touching account given by Dr. Bickersteth, Bishop of Exeter, who conducted her funeral service, just five years after this letter was written. The Bishop went back from the church with the family to the house at Hampstead in which she had been living. When he was leaving, Alfred came with him to the door and said, 'I hope you will not think that I have spoken in exaggerated terms of my beloved mother, but indeed she was the beautifullest thing God Almighty ever did make.'

Elizabeth Tennyson must often have needed urgently all her unusual stock of patience and gentleness. She bore the Doctor twelve children, of whom eleven grew up, one, the first-born, dying in infancy. Seven were sons and four daughters. All were tall and handsome and the average length of life of the eleven amounted to over eighty-one years. And they were unusual in other respects than mere longevity. All the sons and, I believe, the daughters too, wrote verse, Frederick and Charles publishing several volumes. Moreover, all of them seem to have shared the peculiarities of the Tennyson temperament, with the strange tendency to hypochondria and absent-mindedness, the devotion to literature and the curious simplicity and unworldliness which marked the Poet even when he became the acknowledged King of English letters, a personal friend of Queen Victoria and of most of the leading men and women of the age.

In childhood Alfred and his brothers and sisters must have been strange denizens of nursery and schoolroom. Tall, swarthy, untidy and erratic, always with their noses in old books, even when wandering about the Somersby and Bag Enderby lanes or roaming the shore at Mablethorpe, covering acres of paper with verses and stories, endlessly spouting poetry or acting plays, and amassing a store of curious learning which made both the girls and the boys for years afterwards legendary figures in the neighbourhood.

The Doctor and his gentle wife must have had a difficult task in bringing up this strange family. As the years passed he was forced to knock three of the Somersby sitting-rooms into one to



make an adequate drawing-room and to build the Gothic banqueting hall to accommodate them at meal-times. None the less, he preferred to educate them for the most part at home. Frederick was sent to Eton in due course, as befitted the heir of the Grimsby properties, but the others stayed at Somersby, except that Charles and Alfred went for four years to the Grammar School at Louth from the ages of seven to eleven.

Possibly lack of money may have had something to do with this. The receipts from Somersby, Bag Enderby and Benniworth seem to have averaged about £450 a year and those from Grimsby about £250, and in Benniworth and Grimsby curates had to be paid. These were a perpetual source of trouble and Alfred used to say that his early years 'rang with the detestation of curates.' Frederick's Eton bills used to come to about £150 a year, and the following are household items for a typical twelve months:

	£	s.	d.
Bread . . . . .	20	16	0
Butcher . . . . .	50	0	0
Wages . . . . .	46	5	0
Coals . . . . .	31	4	0
Tea . . . . .	5	0	0
Sugar . . . . .	3	0	0
Groceries . . . . .	40	0	0
Butter . . . . .	18	0	0

something like £215 all told. Beer cost the Doctor about £20 yearly, ale being 2s. and small beer 3d. per gallon—three pints of ale and five of small beer making an average daily allowance. When outside labour was employed, as in building, wages were about 4d. an hour.

It may be that I have underestimated the receipts from the livings, but in any case it is unlikely that the Doctor was a very good manager. His accounts, though voluminous, are not very neatly or carefully written, and it is plain that the labour was a weariness of the flesh, whereas the essays, sermons and treatises, with which his notebooks abound, were written with great care and neatness. Nor does it seem likely that his wife helped him materially in the management of his household.

Indeed both she and her husband must for many years have found their energies more than fully occupied. Children came continually and at brief intervals, Frederick in 1807, Charles in 1808, Alfred in 1809 and the remaining eight in the succeeding



eleven years. Local tradition was that he was 'amaazin sharp' with the children, but his methods were certainly successful. Frederick, the eldest son, won prizes for original verse both in Greek and Latin at Eton and Cambridge. Charles, the second, gained a Bell Scholarship at Cambridge, and Alfred, though he won no scholarship and took no degree, became a scholar in the best sense of the word, with a profound knowledge of the literature of his own country, Greece, and Rome and at least a working acquaintance with French, German, Italian, Spanish, Welsh, Hebrew and Persian.

However strict Dr. Tennyson was, he did not stifle in his children the love of literature, although Alfred said afterwards that his early struggles with Horace spoilt that poet for him till he was over forty, which is not surprising, as the Doctor would not let him go to Louth at the age of seven till he had shown himself able to recite by heart all the four books of Horace's *Odes* on successive mornings. Charles and Alfred would no doubt have learned more and been happier at home than at the Louth School. But the appearance of Mary in 1810, Emily in 1811, Edward in 1813, Arthur in 1814, Septimus in 1815 and Matilda in 1816 made the Doctor realise the impossibility of continuing the instruction of his elder children, and the acquisition of the living of Grimsby in 1816 enabled him to pack them off to Louth in the following year.

Tradition says that in spite of these distractions and of his moodiness and irritability he strove conscientiously to do his duty as a parish clergyman, though his views were not altogether orthodox. For example, he would never read the Athanasian Creed and was stoutly opposed to the doctrine of eternal punishment.

He had a great reputation as a preacher, though the tradition (hardly borne out by extant examples) is that his sermons though 'ower good' were also 'ower short,' an unusual complaint from a member of the congregation. Other Lincolnshire congregations took a different view—as is evident from an old family story of a parson at Spilsby, who, when his listeners began to fidget, cried out, 'Looking at your watches, are you? Tired already? Why, it will be all like this in Heaven.'

Characteristic no doubt was the comment of another ancient villager, when asked about the Doctor's sermons. 'E read um from a paaper and I didn't know what 'e meant.' Some of these sermons are extant—grim and massive works, with a sonority and rhythm not unbecoming the father of poets. I will quote, by way



of example, a section of one on the text, 'Cease to do evil, learn to do well.' This is the second section of this discourse :

'II. Have you, therefore, resolved thro' the Grace of God to renounce the indulgence of sinful inclinations and practices ; have you thus taken the first step towards living unto Christ ? What is then the second ? "Cease to do evil," saith the prophet. What is his next injunction ? "Learn to do well."

'In addition to the crowds who abandon themselves to flagrant immorality, there are numbers who pass thro' life with so scanty a portion of active concern about Religion ; are so far from proving the care of their souls to be their main object ; and fall so far short in tempers and in practise of the scriptural rule of living unto Christ, that they must reasonably expect, if they continue in their present state, to fall short of salvation. In the world, which forms its judgment by its own standard, not by the true standard, the Word of God, they support what is termed a very respectable character. They are on the whole punctual and honest in their dealings ; grave and decent in their manner ; not apt, under ordinary circumstances, to use profane language, or to fly out into passions and quarrels ; generally present in the public worship of God ; and attendant perhaps, more or less frequently, on the Sacramental table. Possibly you enquire, "Are not all these things right ?" That is not exactly the question which you should propose. The true question is—supposing this conduct, as far as it advances, to be right ; is it sufficient ? Is it living unto Christ in such a manner as the Scriptures declare to be necessary to salvation ? Now in suggesting the enquiry, far be it from me to encourage any of you censoriously to pry into the character of others ; but most earnestly let me importune each of you thoroughly to examine his own ; that he may discover whether it has been exhibited in the preceding picture. To the question then, whether the conduct which has been described be not right as far as it advances ; the Scriptures reply that it is right if it has originated from right principles, from Christian motives. If you have been temperate only for the sake of preserving your health ; if you have been decent in your conversation, grave in your deportment, honest and quiet in your dealings and regular in presenting yourselves at the House and Table of the Lord, only for the sake of your reputation or for some other selfish and worldly reason ; there has been nothing in all these things of living unto Christ. But let us make a more favourable supposition. Be it admitted that your conduct has flowed in some degree from the love of Christ. I cannot suppose, if you belong to the class of which I now speak, that it has flowed



*principally* from the love of Christ. Had that been your principal motive, it would have given birth to far other fruits. But your conduct flowed in part from love to Christ. Poor and deficient indeed has been your love for the Lord Jesus, if you have been satisfied with manifesting it by such feeble tokens. And poor and deficient is your knowledge of the Bible, if you think that you show that love for Christ, which the Bible requires of every true Christian. What saith the Old Testament? "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with *all* thine heart, and with *all* thy soul and with *all* thy might." What saith the New? "Ye are not to live unto yourselves but unto Christ who died for you. Whatsoever ye do, do *all* to the glory of God, that God may in *all* things be glorified thro' Christ Jesus." Interpret by its comprehensive yet most perspicuous explanations the import of the direction, "Learn to do well." Behold what it is to keep the heart with all diligence! Behold what it is to be holy in all manner of conversation and goodness! Behold what it is to love your neighbour as yourself! Behold what it is to keep under your body and bring it under subjection! Behold a task which demands fervent zeal, affectionate gratitude, unabated diligence, unwearied exertion. At home and abroad to be actively employed in doing good; to visit the fatherless and the widow in their affliction; to withstand corrupt example and keep ourselves unspotted from the world; to adorn day by day with increasing holiness the Doctrine of our Saviour in all things; to let our light shine before men for the very purpose of leading them to glorify our Father Who is in Heaven; to labour to be holy because our Lord is holy; pure because He requireth purity; just and true and merciful because He loveth justice and truth and mercy; this it is to learn to do well; this it is to have the grace of God, this it is to live unto Christ; this it is to mortify the flesh with the affections and lusts.'

Much of such discourses must have passed well over the heads of his rustic parishioners, when his great voice boomed them out from the pulpits of Somersby, Bag Enderby and Benniworth, where, with a frugal piety, he would often repeat his old sermons at decent intervals.

Indeed, the Doctor must often have chafed at the limitations of his remote parish. For Lincolnshire in those days was a sadly barbarous Arcadia, as Alfred Tennyson's dialect poems and some of his own reminiscences well illustrate.

One of his aunts used to tell how the girls had to have a friseur down from London to dress their hair for the County Ball, 'and do you know,' she would say, 'we used to keep our heads dressed



sometimes for a fortnight, for it was two guineas a head, and when we took the hair down, there was often life, my dear, *life*.' This same aunt's coachman was fond of eating lumps of pig's lard in milk, and once, when he had made an unsuccessful effort to stick a sheep, was seen to strike it on the head, shouting at it, 'Die, thou beëast, wilt tha—dang tha.' A young woman, whose father went mad, tied him to a tree and beat him savagely to exorcise the demon. This spirit penetrated even into the Doctor's own household, for it is recorded that his coachman, Horlins, to whom I have already referred, when reprimanded for keeping the harness dirty, carried it into the drawing-room and threw it on the floor, bawling out to his master, 'Clean it thyself, then.' The cook, too, enraged by some rebuke from master or mistress, was heard to exclaim, 'If you raäked out Hell with a small tooth comb, you won't find their likes.'

But rough as his parishioners doubtless were, the Doctor always took a close and sympathetic interest in their lives, the Somersby tradition being that though he was thought a deal of by the quality, he hadn't a mossel of pride in him and was always very conversible—would stop and talk with anyone upon the road. Another Somersby tradition recalled his fondness for tobacco, later a famous characteristic of the Poet, who used to tell how at the age of fourteen he smoked a strong cigar given him by Hyde, the saddler at Louth, and threw the end into the horse pond—none the worse.

Loving literature and poetry as he did, the Doctor must have watched with pride the development of his gifted sons, though (characteristically) he never would tell them what he thought of their verse, bidding them mind their books, for they would never get bread by such stuff.

As for Society, remote as it was, Somersby was not badly situated in this respect, such families as the Rawnsleys, Coltmans, Maddisons, Alingtons, Walls, Massingberds, Barings and Edens being within visiting distance and all on terms of close friendship with Somersby Rectory. During the years between 1806 and 1830 there is no evidence that the Doctor left Lincolnshire, his only holidays being spent, as far as one can discover, in family visits to the Hostel at Skegness, which Mr. Wall and his sister built as a guest-house for themselves and their friends.

Towards the end of the 1820's a new element came into the life at Somersby. In 1827 Frederick went to Cambridge, to be followed by Charles and Alfred in 1828. The three quickly became intimate with a brilliant and high-minded circle of friends of which Arthur



Hallam was the centre and leader, and the visits to Somersby of members of this circle no doubt brought a fresh glow and new warmth to life at the Rectory. Even the moody Doctor must have fallen under the spell, and the fact that in 1830 he undertook, after twenty-odd years of isolation at Somersby, another tour on the Continent, is perhaps evidence of a reawakened interest in life and of a growing sense of freedom from the cares and distractions of family responsibility.

This time he visited Italy, where again, strange adventures befell him. On entering the country he came into conflict with the Austrian authorities through having no passport. 'What business have you here without a passport?' asked the official. 'What business have you here at all?' replied the Doctor in his grimmest manner, and was allowed to pass. He visited Rome, and during the Carnival a man was stiletto'd in his arms, drawing suspicion and then violence on his person, the excess of which he prevented by protesting that he was an Englishman and had not done the deed. Once he was nearly buried alive by an avalanche; once, being seized with giddiness on the edge of a precipice, he was only saved from destruction by his neighbour seizing hold of him. Finally, when he was driving over the mountains in a small carriage, a dog sprang out and frightened the horses, which ran away and hurled the whole equipage over the precipice-edge. The Doctor saved himself from death by convulsively grasping a pine, while carriage, driver and horses were dashed to death thousands of feet below.

In spite of these terrific experiences, he arrived home in July, 1830, apparently in good health and spirits.

Soon after his return he unfortunately found himself in a new embarrassment, for the brilliant Arthur Hallam had, when only nineteen years old, fallen in love with the Poet's sister, Emily, who was two years his junior. The young man's father, Henry Hallam, the famous historian, felt himself obliged to intervene, as he thought Arthur too young to be engaged and did not feel himself able to make his son an allowance which would suffice for the support of a family. In the spring of 1831 Mr. Hallam wrote to Dr. Tennyson telling him that he felt obliged to forbid his son to visit at Somersby again during his minority. In this decision the Doctor concurred, though no doubt with some opposition from his wife and daughter, for it transpired later that the lovers continued to correspond throughout the period of their enforced separation, and Mrs. Tenny-



son was strongly suspected of complicity. As is well known, the romance was shattered by the untimely death of Arthur Hallam in the autumn of 1833. Before then, however, and indeed very soon after his receipt of Mr. Hallam's letter, namely in March, 1831, Dr. Tennyson was (according to Hallam Tennyson) found dead in his armchair. There is a strange uncertainty about the cause of his death. Hallam Tennyson's description suggests a sudden death from heart failure. Another story says that typhoid was the cause, while according to Canon Rawnsley death was thought to be due to some highly infectious disease—the windows of the house were all thrown open and the body carried out of the house to be isolated, when Mr. Rawnsley of Halton rode over and had it taken indoors again and the windows closed.

Within a few hours after the funeral Alfred passed the night in his father's bed in an earnest longing to see once more the spirit of one who, in spite of faults and eccentricities, had so surely laid in the minds of his children the foundations of Christian faith and high endeavour.

*(To be continued.)*

#### PRIMROSES.

WHATEVER spring may yield me or withhold  
 In other years; though bitter memories flout me;  
 Though even before my fire my heart be cold  
 However close I draw my cloak about me,  
 This I shall know;—in cool-enshadowed hollows  
 Of Guernsey meadows loved of sudden swallows,  
 That every turn in truant lanes discloses,  
     There bloom primroses.

This thought is mine to hold, is mine to keep  
 Warm in my breast whatever clouds have darkened  
 And chilled the day;—that even upon the steep  
 Bare crags, in ravelled thickets where I hearkened  
 To the lark's song, among all spring-enchanted  
 Sweet vagrant ways—the mellow old bird-haunted  
 Grey walls, the windy hills and sheltered closes,  
     There bloom primroses.

M. SINTON LEITCH.



*FISHERMAN'S LUCK CONTINUED.<sup>1</sup>*

BY HAFREN.

It may be that fishermen are kindly sportsmen, or—as I have heard them described—‘murdering humbugs with long and dirty finger-nails.’ While opinion is free definitions rarely can be exact; and, here, the divergence so easily may be linked in truth by opportunity and circumstance that argument is unwise. We can all agree, however, that a fisherman is a philosopher—because, indeed, he must be. That is my own trouble from the day in autumn when the trout season closes until the cuckoo tells me I may fish again; for I neither shoot nor hunt; and this vaunted philosophy of mine grows flabby on the long, low diet of retrospect . . . and yet, even while I was writing the last cowardly sentence I recalled a cream cheese; and, if you will let me continue this business of writing myself into a braver temper, I will explain how a cream cheese may be connected with a fisherman’s philosophy, and show, incidentally, how simple that philosophy is—provided that one is not foolish enough to attempt definition or dissection.

Well, you have only to imagine a set of circumstances whose aspect may range from that of the stalest pictorial joke to something near to tragedy. In fact, I had snatched a few hours of a lovely evening to go fishing; driven twelve miles in buoyant, singing mood; put up rod, line, cast and favoured Iron Blue—only then to discover that indispensable waders had been forgotten. Until that moment, I had thought my old sea vocabulary also had been forgotten. Not that I found pride in a memory so retentive. On the contrary, I was shocked—shocked, that is to say, that my voice should inflict its puny insult upon the sunlit peace of that country-side to which I owed so much. Then came the saving laugh; and, since fishing was impracticable without waders, I took down my rod, sat in the car and smoked a cigarette. Now, although definition is foolish, I have always maintained that a fisherman’s philosophy is synonymous with fisherman’s luck; and that this luck is not chance gain, but the compensation in his small employ-

<sup>1</sup> Previous articles on ‘Fisherman’s Luck’ appeared in the CORNHILL in August, 1931, July, 1933, and December, 1934.



ment which reflects the universal balance, if he has the mind to realise it. I was, indeed, waiting for this realisation before driving away, when, in the mirror, I caught sight of the farmer striding down through the roots toward the car. He was gingerly carrying a white paper bag, and in it, as I soon learnt, was his gift of a cream cheese—none of your rennet-bound concoctions, but wholly cream, with consistence perfect and that exquisite flavour which must be no more than a suspicion. Such cream cheeses are rare; and only a clod would grudge mine these words of praise. For me, it was full compensation; and if you suggest coincidence, I shall take no notice. Besides, the evening had not finished with its gifts.

On the way home, round a bend in a deep lane I observed in the middle of the roadway a small something that might have been a dead fledgling. Upon it instantly pounced a weasel, springing from the bank so close in front of the car that I drew up, sure that it must be killed or hurt. I ought to have known better. The roadway was bare; but immediately the weasel flashed from the bank again, gyrated wildly for a few moments in the middle, then slithered like a snake into the hedge-bottom of the opposite bank, which was pierced by rabbit runs. I pulled out my catapult—not because I had the slightest intention of shooting a weasel, but because my suspicions were oddly aroused; and, sure enough, presently I had a shot at a big grey rat, humped evilly among the hedge roots; one of which my bullet struck. I then witnessed a sudden flurry, and the first round of a fight between a rat and a weasel. They disappeared in a clinch down a large hole, and I do not know how it ended; but I have no doubt that, except for my intervention (totally unheeded), the whole affair was a set piece. Had I been able to haunt the lane I might have learnt which was the victor; for wild creatures often are remarkably regular in their habits and faithful to their 'territory'; and travelling to and from fishing, as I do, at more or less fixed times, I expect to meet with them at or near the same places almost as regularly as the local hawk's Ford on its weekly round. Owing to forgotten waders, my passing that evening was at an unusual hour; so I can only hope that one of my other weasel acquaintances, seen since elsewhere in the lanes, is the champion on whom I put my money.

Agreeing time-tables have gained for me a nodding acquaintance with a stoat. Though small, he is a particularly handsome fellow; and I have an idea he knows it. We first met early in the season



when I was standing in mid-stream in the reach we call the tunnel; and he was so intent on his beat downstream along the left bank that he failed to notice me until he was close opposite. Then he uttered a faint, and most unusual, squeak, and darted to cover behind the trunk of an alder that sits over the water before growing upright. From the bank to the crook the trunk has split horizontally, owing to the strain; and presently I became aware that the narrow gap on my side was filled with the stoat's body, and that he was staring me out of countenance. I told him that he was a cheeky little devil, and turned to the trout whose rising I had awaited—and that was an encounter which several times since has been almost exactly repeated. I say 'almost,' because there have been no more squeaks of alarm or defiance, and once I beheld him wedged in his window without having seen him go there.

It was just above the tunnel that, one evening, a heron drifted down over my head and virtually 'jumped my claim'; for, having alighted among the wild rhubarb, he stalked across the shingle and took up station in the water so near that I could have cast my fly on to his indifferent shoulder. Possibly the intentioned indignity communicated itself; and I am sure his harsh *cronk* expressed more contempt than alarm; for he rose and flounced leisurely back over my head as closely as he had come. Well, he and his forbears were there before me; and, since so many generations of heron, kingfisher, ouzel, moorhen and other partners in the water have still left me trout enough, I am fully content. In truth, the more of them I find there, the more I am reassured of the little stream's life and health. As a countryman (whose own activities, I think, are not above suspicion) remarked to me about the heron: 'Old Crane, he's a rare old poacher; but, all said and done, it's his living'—and no poacher, wild or human, seeks a living in barren coverts. It is the merchant who will kill one hundred trout from a stream in one day who is the first to cry 'No luck,' the first to accuse herons, otters and other 'vermin' of ruining his fishing when his wretched tally fails to satisfy his greed. Sentimentality has nothing to do with it; in certain circumstances, wild creatures also take excessive toll; but it is futile to deny the existence of a human element more constantly harmful to our running waters. I will not dwell on a contention that, by generating heat, might consume a philosophy which disdains it.

Lest I appeared to be off-hand about your understanding of coincidence, let me present truer examples—though both are



touched with magic, which, after all, may be expected by right-minded fishermen. Now, it is astonishing how few know a real March Brown—the dun of that large ephemerid which so often, therefore, accounts for tales of rather sombre-looking Mayfly having been seen before their due season. In the first week of May, while in the act of putting up a hackle Greenwell's Glory (intended to represent a March Brown) I was trying to describe to a companion the real March Brown dun when a particularly handsome specimen flew into the cup of my left hand. And this is all the more odd, because, although the big Red Spinner, into which it turns, is not uncommon on that particular water, the dun is very rarely seen; and we were getting ready to fish at the car, with no wind blowing and no trees near, several hundred yards away from the stream. I leave it to some clever person to suggest *Deus ex machina*. The other example comes from an evening whose lavish promise appeared to be frustrated by my complete inability to find the 'right fly.' In brief, it came unsought, flying obligingly into my open box, into which I had been desperately scowling—the word shows how little I deserved of magic, or the immediate success therefrom; but, please, remember the law of compensation; and, to prevent you from looking in the dictionary, I will explain that good luck undeserved has to be paid for, to strike the balance.

I had little doubt of it some days afterwards. The Mayfly was up; and, wanting a special trout, I crept cautiously among the undergrowth toward the tail of a mill pool. While yet out of sight of the water I could hear sounds of commotion, as if a dozen trout were rushing helter-skelter in a Mayfly gorge. A cloud of Mays then rose above the fringe of bushes; silence grew, and I heard a clucking hen. When I came to the pool all was still. Opposite was a bare slope leading down from the open back yard of the mill house; but I had eyes only for the pool. All at once, another hatch of Mays came drifting downstream close to the surface; I began to whisk my fly in readiness—and then, down the bare slope scurried a fleet of tiny yellow ducklings. They dashed into the pool, scuttering hither and thither with beaks wide open, gobbling Mayflies on the water, standing on it to stretch for those in the air, gourmandising until the hatch thinned and rose like the last one. Then the foster hen clucked; and up the bare slope the yellow imps scurried, as innocent as angels. When the performance began again I was too helpless with laughter to mind. Instead, I crept



away, found my brother, and sent him hurrying to fish the pool. Payment shared is payment halved ; and, anyhow, his account with luck needed balancing.

Since a trout rod was taken, I include a visit to Scotland in my fisherman's luck. I have joined ships in Scottish ports and sailed round and about ; but, until this year, I have never really ' been there.' The statement is so unimportant that I must plead in excuse the new-comer's customary sense of discovery—for me, the discovery of new loveliness and kindly people ; of grandeur and quiet dignity ; and of spiritual reactions—as for instance, when, on a blazing afternoon, I lay for recovery high up beyond Inverlochlarig at the head of Glen Voil. Near by, a massive sheep stood sentinel, as if carved upon its pedestal of an outcropping boulder. Far below, beyond the farmstead, shone the burnished silver mirror of Loch Doine ; but irresistibly my gaze was drawn to the ranging hills, where films of mist, never quite unveiling, preserved the mystery and the altitude of the topmost crags. How commonplace the illusion of light and shade and distance ; how easy to rhapsodise—yet, as then, simple perceptions can bring about a humility so profound that, by spiritual reaction, we soar, conscious, proud, grateful that our being is part of the wonder of Creation. Life is to be trusted. Religion—and, no doubt, I read it somewhere—is the apprehension and the love of Life's mystery and beauty. It is open to all who possess imagination, and will respond with awe to the beauty or splendour offered in the universe. I did not, therefore, find it strange to feel the same reaction when watching the Garry salmon leaping at the Falls in the sun-shafted gorge near Struan—the inescapable urge, the grace and energy of their flashing forms, no less symbolic than the immutable crags of Voil. And—so that I may safely come down to earth—it is no small luck for a Southron fisherman to sit on a rock and be able to slap the broad back of a fifteen-pounder as it shoots through a flume on its way to the falls above.

That evening, being an incorrigible experimentalist, I put up the trout rod and waded into Loch Voil, whose surface was so still that the rings from a hatch of small black fly assumed an undue importance, and might have been mistaken for rising trout. These were lacking ; once only, in mid-loch, a large fish rolled, showing a gleaming segment almost black above the lazy upheaval, that for a



moment or two creased the perfect reflection of colour and form of the steep braes beyond. I stood, smoking a cigarette while my fly, cast and fifteen yards of line floated—straight-ruled, one might have imagined, for ever; certainly until, stationed there like a heron, I became self-conscious. Behind, on the loch-side road, someone stopped and went on again, too polite or pitying to pry, laugh or comment. Never mind. The mild lunacy should win for me the applause of dry-fly zealots. They might even agree that tremors of mirth transmitted to the floating fly are new tactics deserving copious, learned notes on quivering hackles that will blur refraction, attract by movement and yet deceive the fish. On that I have an open mind. My own fly, quivering or patient and rigid as a painted ship upon a painted ocean, took trout. Too small to net, elusive as quicksilver, they were released without being handled, kicking themselves free from the hook held firmly by finger and thumb on the surface.

With moon instead of sun, and on another loch, a further lunacy proved again that glass-smooth water need not deter the dry-fly man; but, since I am no bigot, I am not ashamed to record the use of dry flies for wet practice. Scissors and saliva, fast water—and there you are, adaptable and adapted to the occasion. So it happened, for instance, below the Spital of Glenshee, where inviting water, curving against the road, offered an interlude for the quietening of nerves still fluttering after the sudden disengagement of gears when descending the Devil's Elbow. This time, a barbless hook—for the little brownies tinged with olive, that fought like gypsy nippers, of whom they reminded me. I did not kill them; nor, despite local reassurance of custom, could I bring myself to kill any trout caught in Scotland during the haphazard fishing of a thousand-mile visit. Better brown trout are to be caught there. If that were not common knowledge already, I was soon to gain it; for, on the way home, in the coffee-room of a Cheshire country town I beheld three monsters in a glass case, labelled 'Caught in the Tummel'; but of all those in Scotland that I saw killed, or on neighbouring breakfast plates, not one would have passed the honest scrutiny of an English water-bailiff. It is my one reproach—foolish, perhaps, as my own sense of misdemeanour when I acted upon the invariable information and advice: 'Brown trout? There is no law of trespass in Scotland. Fish where you like; and, if you are challenged, move on, or wait until your chal-



lenger has moved on.' It occurred to me that, had my boyhood been spent in Scotland, I should have missed the fearful delight of many a chase by keepers; nor should I now hold brown trout first in my regard; and, while maturity in stricter convention nagged at me, somehow, for poaching, the essential zest of risk was lacking. A confusion of the old Adam, prejudice and shaky self-righteousness, cleared by asking for permission when I could, and chancing it when I could not—though I am still left with the suspicion of a snag somewhere, and that my character may have been stained. A weaker, more disappointed fly-fisherman might have flung conscience to the wind and taken the opportunity of a spate furtively to dribble a worm. After all, customs, like morals, are a matter of geography; and, if the killing of small trout is in question, I cannot answer the Scotsman who cannily asks me if they manage such affairs better in Wales.

I knew Wales would come within this purview sooner or later—and I am glad; for it enables me to confess a temporary faithlessness. And I was wrong, too, in saying that I had only one reproach against Scotland. I have two; and I shall endeavour to make the second more ridiculous than the first by borrowing Eddie Cantor's 'Look what you've done!' Happily, Wales, through her own wonderful illusions, has since rebuked and shown the folly of my comparison in her disfavour; but, although a red squirrel with a white tail may have been sent across my path in token of her intentions, I am not yet sure of her complete forgiveness—as you shall see. Lately, I visited my Welsh valley of hope; and when I say that hope there refers to sea-trout, many of you will realise the fickle chances of my errand. I will be brief. One sea-trout only did I meet with. He, too, expressed approval of dry-fly tactics; he rose, indeed, at my home-made carpet-bagger with the forthright manners of a two-pound brown trout at the Mayfly. Even as I struck (timed to a nicety, though I say it), a bull hooted in high-pitched rage and came charging across the rough behind me. I am neither iron-nerved hero nor sprinter. There was no hedge; the water—so sunlit and entrancing one moment before—ran deep, and suddenly looked demnition chill. It was no real consolation that the bull turned off at a tangent before I had to take the plunge. Sea-trout wait on no man's convenience. As I remarked, I am not yet sure if Wales has wholly forgiven me. Fisherman's luck alone will show.



## THE WINDOW.

BY MARY CARTER.

THE window was not large, but the lower half was pushed up to its extremest limit, for it was April, and the sun was pleasantly warm. The window-sill corresponded with the window, and was not spacious ; but it supported at each end a small box, firmly restrained from falling into the street by a wire that was secured to nails in the wall on either side. The boxes contained a small geranium plant apiece. To the left of the window was the angle of a projecting piece of wall ; and under the guttering a half-finished martin's nest clung to the brickwork.

From the low level of a small bed beneath the window the most entrancing scene was framed in that narrow window. The thick, velvety leaves of the geraniums spread out in buoyant growth. The flower-buds hung in clusters, plump with promise of bloom. Beyond the miniature branches fair white clouds sailed over a cobalt sky.

Suddenly there was a swift rustle of feathers in flight, and from the nest on the wall softest twitterings came, mere breaths of music ; and the gleam of white and iridescent blue jewelled the sunny wall under the eaves.

A few crumbs lay on the window-sill, a repast ever prepared for the chance guest. Two sparrows scurried down from the adjacent roof, and alighted on the sill. Hop, hop ; then a few morsels taken ; their chestnut-brown heads and daintily marked feathers vividly clear at so close a proximity. One waywardly skimmed back to the roof ; but its fellow sat on the edge of the sill awhile, discoursing in husky chirps, then sped away.

The little girl on the bed below the window drew an ecstatic breath. *What* a summer this was going to be ! Last summer there had been only one geranium ; and no martins had built their nest. Now, as she lay, the white, massy purity of the clouds shone behind one of the plants, showing forth the fretted edges of the leaves. Behind the other, deep blue merged into the sheen of its foliage ; she could not think which was the most beautiful ; and over the edge of the nest on the wall a little head peeped, and bright eyes surveyed the world with enchanting confidence.



A green caterpillar, escaped from one of the plants on the sill, looped hastily along the stonework. It slipped from the edge and threw out its life-line in time to save itself from destruction below. Nancy drew herself up with difficulty and leaned across the window-sill to ascertain the insect's fate.

Far below the attic window where she lay she could see the slum ; grim, flat walls, the doors and windows but mere interruptions in the unfriendly surface. A narrow, curbless court, black, dirty and sunless, turned out of the road below her ; and beyond, at the end, a wider thoroughfare rumbled with the noise of a cart full of beer barrels.

As Nancy looked down, troops of children, just free from school, filled the alleys, shouting, playing, with apparent enjoyment ; a happiness that was incomprehensible and horrible, in that it could be felt in such a place.

The little girl threw herself back upon her bed and looked at the bright blue check coverlet, and then round the bare, but very clean little room. A bunch of daffodils was in a glass jam-pot on the table ; a picture of a shepherd with some sheep hung over the fireplace. In about two hours' time, after the children had gone back to school, Nancy's mother would come home from her charring, and would cook something nice for tea. The little girl nibbled a biscuit, talking to her doll that lay on her pillow beside her as she watched for the house martins.

At the usual hour Nancy's mother returned from work. As usual, she prepared a meal, and attended to her little daughter's wants. She was a quiet, kind, matter-of-fact young woman, combating the sorrow of her widowhood, and the child's frailty with calm capableness. When the meal had been cleared away, she sat on the child's bed by the window, and heard about the house martins, and the sparrows, and the caterpillar ; but her mind seemed but partly attentive.

'I went to the hospital to-day,' she said suddenly. 'And you are to go in the day after to-morrow. The doctor says you are sure to be cured now, with the new stuff they've found for such as you. Won't that be fine ? You'll be able to go to school, and play with other children.'

Nancy lay in stricken silence. The mother had often expressed her hope of a cure for her little one ; but Nancy had never seriously considered it. High above the dreary courts she had looked down upon what had seemed like another world, a purgatory of dirty



passage-ways. Amongst blue skies, majestic clouds, sunsets, birds winging their way past her window, the plants, and the cleanly room, her life had been happy. Now she might have to descend into the slums, become one of those screaming, hoarse-voiced children. Her experience knew of but these two states; the one, in spite of its inactive isolation, was full of pleasures; the other, terrible in its degradation. She spoke nothing of her anguish to her mother during the day preceding her going into hospital. The idea that her being cured, and that the resultant ability to enter into normal child-life was the most desirable object of her life was dominant in her mother's mind; and she divined that to voice her own personal horror of such a future would be beating feebly against the settled convictions of the world at large. Children bow silently to much in this world, accepted only because of its apparent inevitability, though terrible to them.

The hospital, with its spacious wards, and cool, green palms, was a new, and not unpleasant, experience to Nancy. She made friends with several other little patients. These, at least, were gentle and cleanly, under the influence of hospital life.

Nancy was cured. Weakly legs can be made strong these days; though many weeks passed before the miracle in Nancy's case was accomplished. She returned to her home feeling strange and shy, even to her own mother. She sat at the table for their evening meal. Her bed was pushed away into a corner beside her mother's, and the table was now before the window. The geraniums had grown, and were blossoming bravely. Tiny heads peeped over the edge of the martin's nest, and the parent birds were feverishly busy. The sunshine gleamed upon the tea-things on the table.

'Such a nice school you'll find it, dearie,' said her mother, as they finished tea.

Nancy knew that she was to begin school on Monday; she had returned on a Friday.

'I have seen the head mistress, and your teacher; they are so nice.'

Nancy's heart fluttered, and sank with a sickened dread.

'And to-morrow,' her mother continued, 'the little Bradleys have promised to take you to the park. You'll like that. You've heard me speak of Mrs. Bradley's little girls, haven't you?'

The word park conveyed nothing of its true meaning to the child's ignorant mind. In her passage to and from the hospital she had merely seen more and wider streets than the slums below



the window. She pictured a park as some small open space of concrete or stone, enclosed by a low coping, and iron railings, where the children, she knew, resorted for play on holidays.

She joined the little Bradley girls at the street door of her house. They were decent little girls, the children, also, of a widow. They took their way, with Nancy between them, through several short, narrow streets; then out into a very wide road, busy with trams, and cars, and wagons. Nancy, very terrified of the mazy traffic, clung to her protectors as they swiftly crossed the road from curb to island, from island to curb. The first conscious knowledge of the place for which they were bound only dawned upon her as they entered the gates of the park on this other side of the busy road. She did not know then, but she had, in truth, entered what was to be for her the gates of an earthly paradise.

Upon the gravel walk just inside the gates, she stopped.

'Oh!' she said, wonderingly; then again, slowly, 'Oh!'

She had seen pictures of trees; she had imagined them no larger than the geranium plants of her mother's window-sill; and here were trees towering above her, in all their leafy depths, up into the sky. Beneath the trees daisies starred the grass. In the centre of the park was a large bed of flowers, masses of red, orange, and mauve, and these, and the trees, bounded the view; no streets or houses could be seen.

'Oh, how lovely!' cried Nancy again, her voice thrilling with ecstasy as she ran forward into the soft, green grass.

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*The English Association.*—Readers of CORNHILL may like to know that the English Association has just embarked upon a new enterprise in the shape of a magazine entitled *English* (price 2s. 6d.), of which the Editor is Mr. George Cookson. The first number contains, among other interesting things, an article called 'Keats's Friend Mathew,' by Edmund Blunden; 'English as a Bond of Union,' by Sir Evelyn Wrench; 'Charlotte Mason and English Teaching,' by the Rev. the Hon. Edward Lyttelton, and a number of contributions by contemporary poets. It is hoped that this magazine will be an effective agent in promoting interchange of thought on the teaching of English.



## ALPINE ADVENTURES.

I. 1893.

BY A. CARSON ROBERTS.

*After a delightful evening of mountain talk, Geoffrey Winthrop Young, who has done such marvellous feats of climbing after losing his left leg in the war, made me promise to write accounts of the incidents recorded in these three articles. That talk had raised so many vivid memories of mountain companionships and of dangers overcome that I knew it would be an interesting task; but it was only with the thought of circulating a few type-written copies among friends that I wrote. I had never dreamt that any climbs of mine deserved record on the august pages of the 'Alpine Journal.'*

*I was amazed and delighted when he told me that the Editor of the 'Alpine Journal' was enthusiastic about publishing the two accounts I first wrote, that he (Young) thought they should be offered to a wider public, and that he had read one to a group of young people at Christmas who insisted on hearing the other. And I was still more astonished when I found that Colonel Strutt wanted to publish them in the 'Alpine Journal' even after their appearance in CORNHILL.*

## AN EARLY TRAVERSE OF THE GRÉPON—AND A BAD ONE.

IN 1893 I paid my first visit to the Chamonix Aiguilles after several holidays devoted to the Central Pennines and Grisons under the tutelage of Alexander Burgener, Weissshorn Biener, my old friend Peter Sarbach and others.

At that time the last of the unconquered Alpine peaks had just been falling in quick succession to the assaults of such men as Mummery, Morse and Émile Rey. The Aiguille de Grépon was almost the last to retain an untouched summit and was regarded as the most difficult rock-climb in the Alps. Mummery in 1881 had climbed its northern peak and thence also its southern summit, together with Burgener and his little acrobat friend Venetz; while in 1892 and 1893 Mummery had led on two complete traverses of the ridge. The only other ascents prior to 1892, as he tells us on p. 140 of his *Climbs in the Alps and Caucasus*, published in 1895, were by Monsieur Dunod who 'after a month of persistent



effort' reached the southern summit by help of François Simond's clever rope-throwing tactics from the neighbourhood of *Pic Balfour*; by another party similarly led to the southern summit; by Morse, who with Hans and Ulrich Almer reached the northern peak in 1888 by a climb up slabs on the eastern face, thus avoiding the crack up which Venetz had led; and by Morse, Gibson, Pasteur and Claude Wilson, who in 1892 reached the southern top by Dunod's route. Mummery states that the Grépon had defied all the other attacks made upon it: thus he and Venetz only had led up the famous crack, surmounting the first sheer step on the N. arête, which is now used by nearly all who make the climb.

I had engaged as guide Joseph, a younger brother of Alfred Simond of the Montanvers Hôtel, and with him made a number of delightful climbs. One of these was a traverse of the Grands Charmoz, a sister Aiguille closely linked with the Grépon. On it that mighty fellow Schaller, who was leading my friends Wherry and Aston Binns, helped me to reach a seat on the top of that pinnacle known as the *Bâton Wicks*, poised on the platform of the southern peak with part of its base reposing on air. This climb gave us close-up views of the Grépon—a majestic flake of granite shaped like the two hands of a giant, held edge to edge with the fingers upright.

My own guide told me that he was not prepared to climb that peak. Schaller offered to 'try' for a fee of 500 francs and I could find no other who would go as far as that, except Alfred Simond who wanted a still higher price to leave his hotel for the venture. My purse was light, and the best I could do was to persuade young Joseph Simond to come on a reconnoitring expedition. He introduced as porter, Joseph Aristide Simond, who was keen to join us and had the physique and figure which should make a first-rate climber. Quite recently I have heard that he was a qualified guide a full year before joining me as porter.

So early one morning we tramped by candle-light across the 'Valley of stones,' and breakfasted on that plateau of rock in the Nantillons Glacier where, I believe, a good shelter-hut now stands. We had no great difficulty in reaching the little gap above the Charmoz-Grépon Col immediately below which is the foot of the crack, but it was still very cold there on the W. side and powder snow was being blown about. I had been bracing myself on the way up to announce firmly that I proposed to attempt the crack, provided it looked at all within my compass. What



I saw was a crack, wide enough for a foot or an arm, running straight up a smooth and perpendicular face of granite for about 70 ft. with one bend half-way up providing an obvious resting place; and this did not enlighten me much nor make me feel confident on the point. I took off my sack and hat and went to its base<sup>1</sup>: there was no demur, Joseph the guide planted himself at the top of the gap and hitched the rope, while Joseph the porter came to give me a shoulder up. I have a clear recollection of great difficulty in gaining the first few feet after using his shoulder and up-reached hand. After that it was an exhilarating struggle, with the jammed right foot or knee always serving as the main anchor, and a continuous search for hold for the right hand inside the crack (sometimes an icy search): that hold had to be strong enough to support one against the pull needed to raise the anchor and plant it a few inches higher. I believe I was lucky in these searches; sometimes, where handhold was wanting, I found a firmly-jammed stone far in or was able to work a loose one into a safe position, but once or twice I had to trust largely to jamming my elbow into a hollow. Several times I shouted 'Es geht' to the anxious *Frenchmen* below. I do not think the left foot, although always scrabbling for rugosities, ever comes into useful play except at the resting-place half-way up. Those who have climbed the Monolith crack on Griben, or that left-leg crack on the Napes Needle, will understand the kind of struggle needed. The all-absorbing fact on this climb (and on some others) is the early knowledge that out at the top is the only way to finish it alive. Little Venetz must have had good pluck, for the top part looks the more difficult.

When we had gathered on the fine platform above, we walked up to Burgener's 'Kanones Loch'—the hole which looks from below like a patch of snow—and passed through it into sunshine. I was not yet suffering from any foolish feeling of elation, because, viewed from the Charmoz, there was above us on this ridge another step quite as sheer and quite as long, with apparently no chance of circumventing it on either face. I had heard nothing of an *inside* course. While I was inspecting the eastern face one of the Josephs called attention to scratches leading into a cleft near the arête. After clearing one rather difficult bulge this led us up into that great, granite crevasse which seems to extend far

<sup>1</sup> Nowadays, the usual and easier method is to traverse horizontally to a point in the crack some 15 ft. above its base.



down into this part of the Aiguille. It provided easy climbing or jamming and brought us out high up on the Nantillons face. After that, other rifted flakes gave astonishingly easy access to the northern summit. The conspicuous, poised stone which stands on it looked to us impossible: I long to know whether we ought to have tackled it, and whether anyone has tied a banner to the pointed summit of this natural flagstaff. In views taken from below on the N. side, this stone is a most imposing object, towering apparently above the other points on the ridge. It is in fact some 6 ft. higher than the next highest part of the northern top but distinctly lower than the southern tower or summit.

We *abseiled*<sup>1</sup> into the deep cleft on the S. of this summit. My recollection of this is difficulty in avoiding a swing to the left on to the Nantillons face—a trouble easily avoided when there is someone holding the ropes below. It was an easy climb to the next peak on the ridge, and soon we stepped down on to that wonderful 'bicycle track' a little below the ridge on its E. side. It is a smooth and almost perfectly-laid pavement of huge granite blocks. The granite work of nature all along this ridge is indeed marvellous—many of the fractures are rectangular and, if not long-weathered, their surfaces resemble the face of an ashlar. This 'track' leads nearly to the notch below the highest summit, which, apart from *Pic Balfour*, is the southernmost point on the ridge.

When in this notch we saw a fine boss of rock some 40 or 50 ft. below us on the sheer Nantillons face, across which ran an admirably hitched rope. There was a rock which made it quite possible to rope down to that boss, and it seemed to us that one party must have made a descent that way. Much of the face below the boss was out of view. We did not attempt the very difficult crack up which Burgener had helped Venetz on the first ascent of the summit, as we had been told that by traversing upwards to the right an easier way could be found. The route we took was certainly not an easy one, and I doubt if we went far enough to find the crack used by those who had come up by way of the southern arête. This bit remains in my memory as one of the

<sup>1</sup> On really difficult climbs a coil of spare rope is usually carried. It is lighter than the standard climbing rope but much longer. By hanging the centre of this spare rope on some firm belay—a prong of rock or a piton driven into a crevice—a descent of 50 or more feet on otherwise unclimbable face can be made. Naturally, as soon as one begins to unreeve the rope from its belay, return by that route is barred. This roping-down process is known as an *abseil* or a *rappel*.



hardest in the climb, needing at one place a specially difficult heave from the shoulder of the second man.

Alfred Simond, guessing that there was just a chance that we might get so far, had given his young brother instructions about this part, derived of course from brother François' descriptions of it. I had listened-in but had heard very little of it, as Alfred's French ran as fast as did his feet upon the mountains—what a veritable chamois he was! My companions searched for, but did not find, François' piton. I am afraid it was not a very determined search owing to our notion that there existed another route from the cleft below us on the north. I am as much to blame as any for the mistake we then made. I knew quite well that it was from the neighbourhood of *Pic Balfour* that the ascents on that side had been made; but the truth of the matter is that at this stage I gave way to that sense of elation and relaxation of effort which, I believe, is largely responsible for the fact that so many accidents happen on the descent. I was resting in a sheltered place quite ready to leave the rest of the work to my companions.

We returned to the cleft and, after some debate, I agreed to be lowered to the boss to report what possibilities of further descent I saw. I called back that the rope which we had seen, was short, and had evidently lodged there by chance, that it was clearly possible to rope down to a ledge I saw below, but that the face below the ledge looked extremely difficult for a traverse to the south or for further descent. Joseph the porter came down hand-over-hand on the climbing rope plus the supplemental. He was more confident than I about the possibility of descent, and the tempting 'rake'<sup>1</sup> sloping up to that point on the arête, known as 'C.P.', was but some 200 ft. below us—one of Dunod's ladders being a conspicuous object on it. The other Joseph, who was much the lighter weight, came down entirely on the light spare rope. On that boss a third man was *de trop*.

I can give no proper account of our climb from it to the 'rake' below. I remember how difficult it was to start the second *rappel* with three men crowded on that boss, also that there were few occasions, after leaving the next ledge, when any one of us felt secure. Certainly, it was a face climb which we ought not to

<sup>1</sup> A Lakeland term applied to sloping shelves running across rock or cliff ramps—produced originally no doubt by geological rift and set back of the upper structure.



have attempted and one which it is a nightmare to remember. I know that both the Josephs behaved splendidly, that each volunteered to come last on the most difficult descent, and that eventually we made a long traverse to the south which ended in some easy steps to the 'rake.' How many hours we were on that face I dare not guess, but I know we reached the north peak before 8.0 a.m. and must have attained the final summit about 9, while the afternoon was far spent when, after a rest and some thankful libations, we left 'C.P.' because after racing down I found the guests at dinner when I re-entered the Montanvers.

Mrs. Jackson was at the head of the table and there were Schusters, Webers, Pasteurs and many other climbers. Before I could escape by the inner door I was forced to confess that I had led. When I came down a little later I found a high pyramid of flowers in front of my place. I am afraid my good little guide did not have as happy an evening among his *confrères*: I heard that he was badly bullied. About twelve years later I met my porter J. A. Simond (*dû* 'le Grépon'), and was told that he was then the leading guide for that Aiguille.

Two years later I was helping to give a welcome to de Fonblanque at a late supper on his return from this traverse. In the course of the talk he said, 'Funny thing, I found this franc on the last summit.' I picked it up and rubbed it with a corner of the tablecloth; when I handed it back he read 'A.C.R. August 1893,' and said how desperately sorry he was that he had brought away my token. I was by no means so when, later, Stutfield put his hand on my shoulder and led me out, remarking, 'Roberts, I'm mighty glad he brought down that franc.'

(To be continued.)



## FLOWER NAMES.

BY G. M. BARNES.

'All the names I know from Nurse,  
Gardeners' Garters, Shepherd's Purse.'

So sang the child in the immortal *Garden of Verses*.

But do modern children learn all those old-world 'pet' names, which describe the flowers far better than learned botanical titles?

'Gardeners' Garters' refers to the striped Lady Grass, common in old-fashioned gardens, though not so frequently seen to-day. 'Shepherd's Purse' is the well-known common *Capsella*, sometimes also called 'Pickpocket.'

Snowdrops have many 'pet' names. 'Fair Maids of February,' 'Purification Flower,' and 'Our Lady of February,' the two latter owing to its coming into flower about February 2nd, a festival of the Virgin Mary. A less-known name is 'The Bride of the Crocus,' and perhaps sweetest of all is the old Welsh 'Babies' Bells.'

The Crocus, probably owing to its association with St. Valentine, is known as 'Hymen's Torch,' a very descriptive name for its flaming beauty.

Daffodils, besides the familiar 'Lent Lily,' or 'Daffy-down-dilly,' are prettily described as 'Fairies' Petticoats,' and in France are christened 'Les Pauvres Filles de St. Claire,' to which saint they are dedicated.

The double Narcissus, with deep yellow centre and pale outer petals, is called in the West Country 'Butter and Eggs,' and the lovely sweet-scented Pheasant Eye is 'Sweet Nancy.'

The Cuckoo, presumably because of its arrival with the springing flowers, is responsible for more flower names than any other bird. We have 'Cuckoo Flowers,' usually the dainty *Cardenia*, but sometimes the ragged *Lychnis*, or Starwort. Wood Sorrel is 'Cuckoo's Meat,' or 'Cuckoo's Bread and Cheese,' and the Hawthorn is also known as the 'Cuckoo's Bread and Cheese Tree.' Bluebells are 'Cuckoo's Boots,' and the Dog Violets 'Cuckoo's Shoes,' whilst the yellow Trefoil is 'Cuckoo's Stockings,' and the Wild Arum 'Cuckoo Pint.'

Besides their association with the Cuckoo, most of these flowers



have other local names. The Cardenia is 'Lady Smock,' or 'Milk-maid'; the *Lychnis* 'Ragged Robin,' or 'Ragged Jack'; and the Starwort 'Snap-Jack,' or 'Shirt Buttons.' Hawthorn is 'Hippety Hoppety,' whilst the Wild Arum has many names, 'Lords and Ladies,' 'Parson-in-the-Pulpit,' 'Devil's Men and Women,' 'Adam and Eve,' and 'Cows and Calves.' The yellow Trefoil, too, has as many: 'Ladies' Slippers' (or 'Fingers'), 'Pattens and Clogs,' 'Tom Thumbs,' 'Fingers and Thumbs,' and 'Pettitoes.'

The Red Campion is variously known as 'Red Robin,' 'Jack-in-the-Hedge,' 'Bobby's Eyes,' 'Torch of St. John,' and 'Cross of Malta': whilst the white variety is 'Granny's Nightcap,' and the bladder Campion 'Birds' Eggs.' The Corn Cockle, with its downy leaves, goes by the obvious name of 'Rabbits' Ears.'

What more charming name could be found for the little wild Pansy, than Shakespeare's

'And maidens call it "Love in Idleness."'

And the garden Pansy, besides the old name of 'Heartsease,' is sometimes 'Come and Kiss me,' or 'Two Faces under one Hat,' whilst in Brazil it is known as 'True Love.'

Goatsbeard is 'Jack' (or 'Betty') 'Go-to-bed-at-noon'; and the heady Meadsweet 'King of the Meadow,' or 'Sweet Hay.'

'Bachelors' Buttons' may be the small double *Ranunculus*, or the climbing yellow spring plant otherwise called 'Easter Roses,' and the cheerful Daisy is sometimes 'Billy Buttons.'

Flora Klickman, in one of her delightful 'Flower Patch' books, tells us how the Welsh children call the blue Scabious 'Queen Mary's Pincushion': and Guelder Rose blossoms are 'Queens' Cushions' in some parts of England.

The scarlet pimpernel is 'Poor Man's Barometer,' owing to its habit of closing before rain, or 'Twelve o'clock,' because it shuts its petals at noon.

London Pride, with its pink lacy flowers, is 'Our Lady's Needlework,' and sometimes 'Prettiest of all Flowers,' but the Irish call it 'St. Patrick's Cabbages,' because of the shape of the leaves.

The little blue Speedwell, so common in our hedges, is known to all country children as 'Bird's Eye.'

The drooping pink *Diaetra* is suitably called 'Lady's Locket'; and we must not forget the lovely French name for Laburnum, 'Golden Kain.'

One of the *Convallaria* tribe is always known as 'Solomon's



Seal'; and there used to be a shrub in old-fashioned gardens, seldom seen now, called 'Job's Tears.'

Most people know the wild Clematis as 'Old Man's Beard,' but the more poetical name for this climber is 'Traveller's Joy'—pleasanter than the Buckinghamshire title of 'Boy's 'Bacca.' Bucks is also responsible for the unromantic name of 'Hobble-gobbles,' for Marsh Marigolds, instead of the familiar 'Kinecups.'

The Wild Geranium, 'Herb Robert,' is known locally also as 'Poor Robin,' 'Dragon's Blood,' or 'Cats' Eyes'; and the French Willow Herb, or Rose Bay, is also called 'Cats' Eyes' in some places.

The pure white major Convolvulus of the hedges is known as 'Old Man's Night Cap,' 'Lilybine,' 'Bearbine,' or 'Billy Clippers,' and its smaller pink sister as 'Withy-wind.'

The common local name for the Lungwort, with its spotted leaves, is 'Jerusalem Cowslip,' but in the West it is appropriately named 'Measles.' Cornwall, too, calls the flat shiny leaves of the Pennywort, 'Penny Pies,' a name which might be expected from that land of pastry.

The Foxglove has the perhaps natural alternative name of 'Thimble Flower'; and in Sussex Catmint is 'Lion's Mouth'; whilst their Hampshire neighbours call the Polyanthus 'Jack-in-the-Box,' or 'Spring Flower.'

'Other days, other ways,' but it will be a great pity if these charming old-world names are allowed to pass into oblivion with the march of botanical knowledge in our schools.



## HIGH FINANCE.

BY IMOGEN STONE.

MARY waved Dick good-bye and good luck. She watched the car as it gathered speed, then walked from the banquette into the yard. With careful precision she shut the tall iron gate that closed out the whirring of the motor wheels on Walnut Street, and with a strong lift of the heart looked at the scene before her. Her garden!

Slowly she turned her head to take in the lovely scene. In the sweet June morning it glowed softly with the delicate colours of early summer. The blue and pink of the hydrangeas, the rose and cream of the oleanders, shade on shade of the irises, the gamut of colours in the little bed and border plants, these were all enveloped and lifted in the exquisite odour of the sweet olive. Even the birds seemed to revel in it, the mocking-birds, orioles, jays, and pops. The very breeze from the river close by seemed to move here with a special freshness, scattering the delicate blooms of the myrtles in soft huddles of wisp-like crêpe on the ground, and setting all the leaves of the shrubs and trees into a pleased nodding and bowing. Mary's happy eyes slowly passed down the far depths of the garden till they rested on the great live oaks. They had a century before marked the site of the big house of the sugar plantation, which had been at last absorbed into the city limits and now clasped on three sides the square that held Mary's treasure and her heart.

How right Dick had been! How good his judgment! How she admired her vigorous young husband! No doubt it was a risky thing to have taken such chances, and only a man of Dick's steady nerve would have dared. But Dick had dared! Just two years ago Dick had closed the deal for this whole square of ground facing Walnut Street and extending back and merging into beautiful Audubon Park, with its two hundred acres of glorious oaks and streams and flowers and driveways.

She thrilled again as she called to mind how Dick's belief in a rising market had been justified—so marvellously justified that she knew nothing like it except in fairy-tales. This miracle making of



money! Who could have dreamed it! Dick's bravery had, she thought, the reward that no doubt comes to all courageous men.

Here they were in 1929 in this beautiful house that Dick had, on new and higher tides in the market, been almost immediately able to build, closed in on three sides with a brick wall, which already the delicate little leaves of the *figus* were changing into a living hedge of green. And the garden! This breathing, pulsing expression of her love of beauty and life! And the children! There they were—the precious dears!—down on the river side of the garden under the big oak. Little Dick and baby John were tumbling, with squeals of glee, about their boon companion, Bob the collie, while Emilie, with the eagerness of five years, was trying to reach up to see the eggs in the nest they had found yesterday. Aggie was helping her to climb up. Aggie had been taking care of the children for the last six weeks because Mammy had been ill.

At the thought of Mammy, Mary gave a sigh of relief. She was better, out of all danger, and was to come home from the hospital this afternoon. The old woman had been born up on the sugar coast in St. James' parish on Mary's grandfather's plantation the year of the outbreak of the Civil War. She had spent all the sixty-nine years of her life as nurse for her white folks—guide, counsellor, and friend to three generations, for she had nursed Mary's mother, Mary herself, and was now nurse to Mary's children. She bore her years lightly; in her bright eyes still flashed undimmed the light of authority. As time had gone by she had become more and more closely bound to this family, due perhaps to the fact that the episode of her married life had been short and unsatisfactory, leaving her with no children; and further no doubt to the fact that such a relationship as hers to a white family, which had been the commonplace of slave days, had gradually become so almost entirely obliterated as to be unique. Few families in the South had now such a figure. She knew no woman of her own race who had had such a life as hers, and the lack of this bond of common experience kept her in some measure isolated from the coloured people of her acquaintance. Though she was quite characteristically of her race in certain primitive instincts, yet she could not have lived among them with entire happiness, for she was, in truth, strange to them and their ways. She liked her white people best.

In the days of the contemplated removal two years ago, Mary found the old lady rather wistfully eyeing her whenever conversation arose about the move. Finally the trouble came out:



'Is dey gwine ter be a place fer me in de new place?' And so it came about that a small cottage a short distance from the rear of the new house balanced the somewhat modish garage on the other side, and Mammy with her precious possessions was moved in.

Mary and Dick had smiled at the grotesque array of furniture and ancient furnishings, and in amused comment they had told each other that at the first opportunity they would persuade the old woman to let them fix her up all fresh and new. Now the opportunity had come. When she began to improve from the serious illness which had made them hasten her to the hospital, Mary quietly laid her plans for the rejuvenation of the cottage. She had gone down to one of the big department stores on Canal Street and bought a roomy bureau and armoire, a comfortable rocking-chair, a good bed with mattress and springs, a large rug, bright curtains and other small things that Mammy liked, and called 'knick-knacks.' In the meantime the cottage had been thoroughly cleaned and touched up with paint. Two days ago the new things had come up and yesterday they had all been moved in and put in place. After taking from the old stuff certain things she knew Mammy valued, Mary had been at a loss to know what to do with the rest; but the happy idea came of giving it to the Salvation Army people and they had late the evening before got it all off the premises.

As she moved toward Aggie and the children, Mary mused happily upon Mammy's surprise and pleasure in the new possessions, and pictured the old woman in the new chair contentedly rocking away the remaining years of her life. Such a good life! Such a true and faithful heart! How blest she felt that she was able to give to the dear old soul the feeling of complete security, which is, after all, the best gift to old age.

At luncheon it was arranged with Dick that he was to go for Mammy at about four o'clock and bring her home in the car with the aid of the young coloured nurse who had been nursing her at the hospital and who was to stay the first two or three days with her on her return home. It was nearly four now and the house was on tiptoe to welcome Mammy. The children, bathed and dressed, were excitedly dashing to the cottage once more to view their offerings of soap, cologne, and Seidlitz powders, respectively, in places of high honour on the new bureau, and back to the front gate to poke their little faces as far as they could through the iron rods to catch the first glimpse of the car. Bob gravely padded back and forth with them, cheerful but unexcited. Mary was putting a few



last touches to the cottage. She had with special care arranged flowers in a big old china vase ornamented with a painting of a great bunch of bright coloured flowers surrounded by fine extents of gilt leaves and twisting tendrils, one of the old woman's cherished possessions from old days. Zillah came in with a small glass pitcher.

'Here the sweeten water, Miss Mary. I know Mammy goin' to be glad to see this 'cause she like it the most of ever'thing. She say it he'p to keep the palate from fallin' and satisfy the cravin's of the gall. She think in weather like this a weak person got to be mighty careful not to let the gall get busted. She say this sweeten water it sweeten up the bitter of the gall. Mammy talk mighty shore like, but, Miss Mary, does you believe all this?'

'Well, Zillah, no doubt Mammy knows as much about it as the doctors do sometimes. Put the water on the table there. Arrange the pillows comfortably on the bed for her to lie down, for she'll be tired when she gets in. Then turn the shutters of the window-blinds so as to let in the air and keep out this heavy evening sun. Now, have we done everything, Zillah?'

'Yas'm, don't seem to me nothin' is lackin'. The painters nailed Mammy's old horse-shoe back over the door, and we got her big trunk settin' up on those supposes like she always want, and her turkey-tail fan layin' handy on the bereau and her old slippers by the bed.'

'Yes, I just couldn't throw those old slippers away.'

They left and joined the expectant group at the gate. Soon the cry arose, the gate was opened and out they all rushed to the edge of the banquette. From the car came a vigorous voice.

'Mind dem chillun, Aggie! Don't let 'em git so close to dis car. Don't you know dey could git runned over! Miss Mary, why ain't you got a hat on yo' haid? Dis sun'll sco'ch all de colour out yo' hair. Here, Jim, you and Mr. Dick he'p me outer dis here car and let my ole foots git back to my own home. Dere now! Here I is! Miss Mary, chile, I is so glad to git home! I is so glad to git home! Gimme my babies! Put 'em in my arms. Dat what Mammy been wanting. Sugar, is you got any new tooxies? Let Mammy see! Sho nuff, dere dey is! Law, Sister, who done curl yo' hair like dat! Das de way Mammy like it. Dick, where you git dem green pants? Is dey long enough? Don't dey kinder ketch you, baby? Miss Mary, dem pants don't fit dis chile. O my babies, Mammy been a-wantin' you. Mammy been a-wantin' you!'

At last the procession got started, the children prancing on



ahead, Dick and Mary supporting the old woman, her stream of talk never stopping, and Jim the chauffeur, and the nurse bringing up the rear with the luggage.

Soon the cottage was reached and with Dick's help and Mary's encouragement Mammy climbed the four steps up to the little gallery. She paused a moment there and then went on into the newly organised room. For a little while she could not take in the detail of the quiet place, for the brilliant sunshine outside was still blinding her eyes. They placed her gently in the rocking-chair and she leaned back with a sigh of relief and content, her eyes closed and her body relaxed. Zillah brought her a glass of the *eau sucré* and at the tinkle of the ice, the old lady, smiling broadly, gropingly reached out her hand, took the glass, and drank a long draught. This seemed very much to refresh her and she opened her eyes at last and looked around. After a moment or two a look of bewilderment came over the old face. She came to an upright position in her chair and stared wonderingly about. Finally, she called out sharply:

'Miss Mary, where I'm is? Whose house dis here I'm in?'

Mary bent toward her.

'It's your house, Mammy. We've fixed it up all nice and fresh for you.'

'Yes, Mammy, Mary and I thought you ought to have the best in the land and she picked out just what she thought you'd like. And here you are! Don't you like it, old lady?'

She looked long and earnestly first at Dick and then at Mary. Finally, she leaned forward in her chair and began attentively examining the things in the room. At last her gaze reached the armoire and a light broke over her face.

'Miss Mary, is dem sho nuff lookin'-glasses in dat armer? Is dey? Lord, ain't dat grandjer! I been wishin' ever since dem days I knowed Fate Anne dat I had a armer wid lookin'-glasses to de do's. Dat nigger was too airified fer dis worl'; but I lay dem lookin'-glasses would a-settled her! dey'd a-settled her! I sho wish she was livin' to see 'em. An' look at dem roses in dat carpet! Dey minds me of a carpet in de boy's room in de big house on de plantation. An' dat bed! Hit shine like gole! Dem piller shams trimmed wid red—dat jes' de kind I like. Sho', honey, Mammy smell dat nice cologne. Um-m-m! Ain't dat nice! And dere my big vase on de mantelshelf. Hit hol' itself mighty proud 'mongst all dis grandjer! Hit ole but hit ain't fergit who it come



fum. Miss Mary grandma gimme dat 'fore air one of you was born. Hit know it quality and hit show it. Dem was de ole days! Law, Miss Mary, if dere ain't my ole slippers!' And the old woman went off into a cackling peal that had in it certain quavers that made Mary say:

'Now, Mammy, you must lie down for a while. All this moving and excitement have kind of tired you out. Just rest on the bed a little and then you can sit up a short time before you go regularly to bed. But rest now. Just lie down on the bed.'

With the help of Mary and the nurse, the old woman, with much grunting, was finally made comfortable on the bed. Her tired old body seemed to sink gratefully into the yielding softness of the new mattress.

'Now, Mammy, keep quiet. Rest and try to get a little nap. If you want anything, call the nurse. Don't move till I come back. I'm going to bring you some——' Mary stopped.

Mammy was quite plainly paying no attention whatever to what she was saying. What in the world was the old woman doing? Her hands had begun moving slowly over the bed, reaching up under the pillows and then coming slowly down on each side, mashing down on the mattress with all the strength of the old fingers, as though making some careful and necessary examination. Her face had assumed a fixed expression of complete intentness. What was she trying to find out? What was she after? The examining fingers moved on, now with increasing agitation and tempo. Finally, to Mary's amazement, the old woman began to bounce up and down with a drawn, calculating look on her face. Suddenly, without any warning, at one bound she leaped out of bed.

'O my Gawd! O my Gawd!'

Dick and Mary standing speechless beside her, Mammy began pulling the pillows and bedclothes from the bed and flinging them with the strength of a man in every direction. Finally she reached the new mattress with its pretty flowered cretonne cover. At the sight of it she let out a yell.

'Where my mattress! Who done took my mattress! Who done stole my mattress! Where my money! Where my mattress! Who done rob me! Where my money! O my Gawd! O my Gawd!' Mary took hold of her.

'What do you mean, Mammy? What is the matter? What do you want with your old mattress?'

But a light had begun to dawn in Dick's eyes.



'I wants my old mattress! Somebody done rob me! My money in my mattress! Where my mattress!' With a wave of complex feeling Mary understood.

'Listen to me, Mammy,' she said, seizing her by the shoulders and giving her a little shake. 'Did you have any money hidden in that old mattress?'

'Yas'm, Miss Mary. Cose I hid my money in my mattress!'

'Well, what in the world did you do such a foolish thing as that for?'

'Where I gwine put my money if I don't put it in my mattress!'

'How much did you have?'

'How I gwine know how much I had, Mr. Dick!'

'Well, can't you give me an idea?'

'No, sir, I can't give you no idea.'

'Where is the rest of it?'

'Dey ain' no res.'

'Did you put all you had in that mattress?'

'Yas, sir, Mr. Dick. Ever' cent I had.' This seemed to quicken the realisation of her disaster and she flung herself down in the chair and with her head in her hands began rocking and wailing:

'Where my money! Who done stole my mattress!'

'Oh, Dick, what in the world can we do?'

'Where's the mattress? Did you burn it?'

'No, the Salvation Army people came and got all the things I decided not to keep.'

'When did they take them away?'

'Yesterday.'

'Where'd they take 'em to?'

'Oh, Dick, I don't know! Maybe you could find—'

But Dick was gone. When she overtook him he was saying through the telephone:

'Yes, I think it was among those things you took from my house yesterday. . . . Your store-rooms on Tchoupitoulas Street? . . . On the river-front? . . . Yes, I'd like to come down and look. . . . All right. Be right down.'

He turned to Mary and she took courage from the swift assurance of his tone and manner.

'Now, Mary, get your hat and come on. We are going down to that Salvation Army place on Tchoupitoulas Street and see if by good luck they haven't made away with that mattress. There's a



chance, because they just got it yesterday. You've got to go because you've got to identify the mattress.'

'Identify the mattress!' she cried. 'Why, Dick, I don't know how that mattress looked. I just had them take it out. I don't remember anything about it.'

'Well, I tell you what to do, honey. Go back to the cottage and make Mammy tell you what she can about the way the thing looked. Make her describe it. She ought to be able to tell you something of the look of her bank,' with a grin of attempted lightness that Mary did not in the least participate in. She fled.

'Now, Mammy, stop that and listen to me. Do you know how your mattress looked?'

'Who—me? Know how my mattress look? Cose I does!'

'Well, tell me—tell me exactly how it looked.'

'Hit were a big mattress, 'bout de size of dis here one.'

'Yes.'

'Hit were a striped tickin'.'

'Yes.'

'Hit were a good mattress.'

'Yes.'

'I done had dat mattress a long time. Yo' maw gimme dat mattress. She done use it a long time on her baid, but hit were good yet.'

'But tell me how it looked, Mammy.'

'How hit look? Hit were a hair mattress.'

'But how did it look?'

'Ain't I done tole you hit were a striped tickin' mattress?'

'Yes, but, Mammy, there are hundreds of mattresses like that.'

'Well, hit were a striped tickin' mattress wid square cornders.'

'Oh, Mammy,' wailed Mary.

'Well, fer Gawd sake, Miss Mary, what you want me ter say!' broke out the badgered old woman.

'Tell me how it looked!'

'Ain't I done tole you how it look? Hit were a mattress and hit look like a mattress and dat all I know!'

The old darky flounced back in her chair with a warning impression of finality.

'Oh, Mammy, can't you help me! What am I going to do?'

'What is *you* gwine ter do? What is *I* gwine ter do? An' me jes' finish puttin' patches on dat mattress outer de scraps fum dem winder curtains what you gimme. An' all de time my money——'



But Mary was racing down the steps.

Under the guidance of the rather trig-looking young lieutenant, Dick and Mary were poking their way through the heaps of incredible stuff in the Salvation Army store-house. The reeking mustiness of the rooms was made bearable only by the height of the ceilings and the strong river breeze that was coming in across the levee.

'We keep the furniture in the front room and the clothing in this room, as you see,' explained their guide. Mary looked and shuddered.

'Then in this next room we keep the bedclothes and mattresses.'

Mary knew her job was now before her—to advance upon these intolerables and find Mammy's mattress. She had lost it and she must find it. It took all the inherited resolution of a grandfather in the Washington Artillery from Louisiana, who had all day served his gun in the ceaseless firing that supported Pickett's charge at Gettysburg, for Mary to go forward to those inert masses, filled with no telling what horrors. She turned and peered and at last caught sight of what she was so eagerly looking for—on a mattress near the top of a crazy heap a big patch of cloth that she instantly recognised. It was a piece of the brightly figured cretonne that she had used in the early spring to make new covers and hangings for the screened porch.

'I can get a cart to carry it up? . . . Well, I'll wait and see it loaded on and lead the way in my car so the fellow won't have any trouble finding the house.'

The caravan of two started up-town—a high-powered Cadillac in which there sat by the driver a rather pale young woman, followed by a cart drawn by a mule with a big straw hat on his head, through two holes in which his ears extended and flopped as he languidly trotted up the sunlit street. In the cart lay huddled a nondescript object.

'Mary, we had better have it taken and put on the floor of the garage. Then we can bring Mammy out in that old rolling-chair and let her boss the job.'

It was a curious job. Dominating the scene was Mammy, the last remnant of hospital languor gone, seated in a commanding position, Mary hovering in protective proximity in case of emergency.

'Turn dat mattress over, Jim. Ain't I done tole you hit upside down! How I gwine reco'nise de places fum de bottom? I got ter see my patches on de top.'



Jim and Zillah, scissors in hand, stood ready to do the ripping of the thick, heavily matted hair mattress. Dick moved about, the directing and receiving station in continuous connection with the rolling-chair.

'Fust off, Mr. Dick, make dem niggers rip right up yonder at de top under dat big red patch. Das right! Now, pull it out. Pull hard! Dat hair done packed down good. Keep a-diggin' and a-pullin'. Das de way! Das hit! Han' it ter me, Mr. Dick. Dere now!'

Mary at her station beside the old woman peered in speechless amazement as Mammy seized the dark object that uncoiled as she lifted it high in the air and poured out a tumbling stream of gold coins of all sizes.

'Dat red patch a piece er ole marster dressin'-gown. Hit mark de place I kep' de gole pieces. Now, den! Dat patch up dere, Mr. Dick, right zactly on de yuther side. Das hit! Dat a piece er yo' maw weddin'-dress, Miss Mary. Dig down under dat patch, Jim. Keep a-pullin' de hair loose. Das de way! Dat where de silver dollars is. Dat hair shore packed good. Das hit, Jim! Dere dey is!'

Another incredible sight—three dark reptiles vomiting out a stream of silver.

'Well, Mary, the old lady seems to be an adherent of bimetallism, but this looks considerably like the free and unlimited coinage of silver!'

'Now, down dere close to de bottom. See dat piece er pink? Dig down dere, Zillah. Bust up dem knots er hair. Dat where de two-bitses an' de fo'-bitses is. Dat a piece er Miss Em secondary dress. Warn't dat a weddin', do! Dem stack-cakes an' de candles and de dancin'! Look dere, kinder close to de middle; see dat blue? Dat a piece er Mr. Alec fust pants. Das where de green-backs is. I 'members de day like hit was yistiddy. When de time come to take 'em off, he crawl under he grandmaw bed so we can' git him. On dat side, dig down under dat patch er guinea-blue caliker, Jim. Dey some green-backs dere. Dat a piece er de dress I had on when de levee busted an' I got floated off on top er de chicken-house. Dat patch got water-stains on it right now. Down here in dis cornder, Miss Mary, under dat black piece. Make 'em dig down dere. Dey plenty green-backs dere. Dat a piece er yo' maw mournin' dress fer yo' paw. Dem was bad days! Dat de time we lose de plantation. Hit look like de end er de worl' done come.



Dey was weepin' and moanin'. Over dere, kinder close to dis side. See dat piece er white what look kinder cobwebby? Dat yo' fust party dress, Miss Mary. In dem days you wa'n't thinkin' 'bout Mr. Dick. Zillah, gal, go git me a bucket. Dis stuff all a-spillin' outer my lap.'

Quiet at last reigned in the place. Mammy, with surprising equanimity, on being put to bed had fallen peacefully asleep under the watchful eye of the young nurse. The shadows of the early night were blotting out the scenes of the excitement of the late afternoon. Mary and Dick were in her sitting-room upstairs. Mary had a somewhat blanched look, but Dick with amused zest was reviewing the experience.

'Well, Mary, of all the occasions which it has been my privilege to assist at, as these Creoles say, this is the outbeatin'est! Here that old ducky has been saving her money for all of half a century, and apparently has never wasted a dime or lost a nickel. It is perfectly unparalleled! Do you realise how much came out of the old mattress? Look here,' indicating the heterogeneous piles on the table. '\$3,240.50!'

But Mary maintained her quiet. Recent events had left her with little power or desire to talk. She did, however, manage to say:

'Dick, isn't there some way to prevent another such risk of her losing her money like that of to-day? I couldn't sleep a wink with that money in the cottage.'

'Yes, and that is what we must decide now. My idea is to put it in the Caledonia Bank for her. She can write a little, can't she?—sign her name? Well, deposit her money, then give her a cheque-book and show her how to make out a cheque, if she should want any more money than her usual wages. Not in a blue moon would she need any more. She would be satisfied and the money would be safe. That seems a good plan, don't you think?'

Next morning Dick and Mary presented their plan. It took a good deal of persuading, but Mary was eloquent. There was one feature of the arrangement that caused very definite demur on the part of the old negro.

'You say you gwine put my money in a bank down on Canal Street? Mr. Dick, dat too fur away! I don't want my money to git too fur away fum me. I is done spent too many years layin' on top er dat money to want to resk lettin' hit git so fur away. Ain't dey no bank near abouts here where you kin put it?'



Dick considered, when Mary intervened.

'Isn't there a small bank close by here on Magazine Street, Dick? I seem to remember seeing one as we have been out riding.'

'Why, I believe there is. Yes,' he said, his brow clearing. 'Now I remember. There is a branch of the Creole Bank and Trust Company around the Magazine corner and about five squares down.'

'Couldn't she put her money there?'

The old woman anxiously hung on the conversation.

'That seems a good idea. I don't know much about them except that they are a rather small banking concern, tho' with a good reputation. But it would be all right. How about it, old lady? Would you like to have your money in a little bank 'round here on Magazine Street?'

'Dat'd suit me, Mr. Dick. Hit wouldn't be so fur.'

And so it was settled. Then the question was raised by Mary if Mammy did not feel strong enough to have Dick drive her right over to the bank and deposit the money. Carefully she was bundled into the car and under Dick's guidance made arrangements with the trim-looking little bank for the placing of her money. With considerable effort and much twisting and pursing of the lips, the old darky wrote out samples of her signature under the amused but respectful eye of the young cashier. It was soon over and she returned home, the rather solemn possessor of statement slip, bank- and cheque-book.

That evening she and Mary had a satisfying conversation in the cottage.

'Well, that's all safe and sound now and we won't have any more chances of accidents like that of yesterday.'

'Yas'm; dat was nigh ter bein' a mighty bad accident.'

'You don't mind losing your old mattress very much, do you?'

'No'm. Hit seem like I done got kinder disj'inted fum dat mattress in de horspital. Dem horspital mattresses was some diffunt fum my ole mattress.'

'Well, I'm glad you feel that way about it. I see you got the patches all right.'

'Yas'm,' said the old woman, fingering the heterogeneous bundle in her lap. 'Zillah brung 'em to me dis mawnin'. I was sho' much oblige' to you fer makin' her rip 'em off and save 'em for me.'

'Oh! I knew you would want them.'



'Yas, ma'am,' emphatically. 'Dem patches is jes' like leaves in a book ter me. I knows I is a ign'ant ole 'oman wi'dout no reg'lar book-learnin'. But when I takes dem scraps in my han's, I kin read de past jes' like leaves fum a book. An' like a book wid picters in it, too. I see de ole times like I was lookin' at picters in a book—plainer'n picters in a book 'cause de picters I sees is got people movin' 'bout in 'em—walkin' an' ridin' and dancin' and clappin' dey han's. I sets here in dis cheer, but I is fur fum here. I been settin' here all dis evenin' wid dis scrap er yo' grandmaw weddin'-dress 'twix my fingers an' I see her like hit was dat same day way back yonder. She jes' startin' down de big stairs an' she turn 'roun' and look at me. I see her face, all rosy like, an' her eyes blue, shinin', and dem flowers on her haid, and dat lace veil. I done been in a fur country, chile—a fur country!'

This June upheaval over, life went on serenely. After a hesitating first week of sleeplessness, Mammy's recovery was quick and complete, due to the fact that Mary had had her stay in the hospital some time longer than really necessary. By the last week of June the family was ready to go across the lake. Dick had got for the summer the Figuier place at Pass Christian. It had a big, comfortable house facing the beach, galleries on all sides upstairs and down, an immense yard with flowers and palms and live oaks hung with moss growing right down to the water's edge. Shaded and cool and life-giving with gulf breezes. It was Paradise for Mammy and the children. She basked in the sun on the beach as the three little adventurers splashed and squealed in the water or sought for marvels in the rippled sand. Dick drove out every afternoon from the city and spent the week-ends. Such happy days!

Each day Mary eagerly awaited Dick's arrival not only for the joy of getting him home but for the thrilling interest of the stories he had to tell of the market. Mary knew little or nothing of money and its manipulation, but she understood enough to know of the mounting values of stocks and bonds that Dick thought 'good buys.' She had not yet, however, reached the degree of hardihood not to tremble when Dick would say:

'Well, Mary, I've made up my mind to buy Bethlehem Steel. It looks like a good money-maker. It's beginning to move up and with this fling I stand to make a pile.'

'Isn't it terribly risky, Dick?'

'Well, of course there is risk. But this seems a new era in the money world. The financiers seem to have got hold of a new



principle that beats the old conservative trading all to pieces. These new values are staying up.'

'Won't they ever come down?'

'Well, I don't know. Maybe these are permanent new levels of value. Possibly civilisation is now putting a higher stamp on certain phases of living which have their basis in these commodities and give them this valuation. Maybe these are real values, not fictitious values.'

'How can you tell?'

'Don't worry, honey! Time will tell!'

Then Dick would invest. And in no time at all there would come the day when, as he bent for her kiss on his afternoon's return, she would see again that special glint in his eyes whose meaning she had come to know. More money! More of this miracle money! As they paced up and down the sea-wall walk they would plan in the lovely moonlight lovely uses for this money. First of all, Mary insisted, they must see if the Figuiers would sell this perfect old place. It was just heaven for the children and life-giving for Mammy. Then it was nice for her and Dick because many of their New Orleans friends came over to the Pass or Bay St. Louis or Biloxi every summer, some of them bringing launches or yachts. Having some sort of boat made it a great deal more fun.

'We will have a boat.'

There were some improvements they would have to make. They would have to have another garage; and she could be more certain of her city servants if they added another servant house, and they would make it real nice and attractive. Then they could make a lovely formal garden of the grounds on the left of the house. It would be fine to have a place to come to any time they wanted, and here on the coast winter was no less delightful than summer, as was testified by the increasing throngs of rich Yankees coming every winter to the Edgewater Gulf Hotel near by. Mary had got so now she could talk like this without trembling.

The wonderful summer came to an end at last. They must get home to put the two older children into school—Sister in Miss Aiken's primary school and Dick in the nursery school. These were both private schools where the children were in the hands of Ph.D. experts, for which Dads paid accordingly. But Mary and all the rest of the mothers felt, rightly no doubt, that if you were going to spend money this was an expenditure you need not hesitate about.

The autumn days grew crisp and cool—lovely, yet with some-



thing ominous of winter in the breezes. All the world of Nature seemed for a moment lingering before seeking cover for stormy days. This began to be paralleled in curious fashion by atmospheric changes in another world, the world of Finance. Wall Street, subtly yet unmistakably, began to feel new winds stirring. Into the faces of the revellers on that famous street—that infamous street—there began to blow whiffs of breezes that had something crisp and chill in them. They would veer off only to return as crisp and more chill. Then they would swoop down for a moment bearing some icy thing on their wings. These happy revellers! who had thought they had found at last the Summer Isles in the great Kingdom of Finance, where no cruel blasts could send the mercury tumbling down, but where men, giants in the new financial earth, could walk for ever in eternal sunshine! These hapless revellers!

‘Is it very bad, Dick?’

‘Pretty bad, Mary. I am going to have to cover. I could raise the money on the Pass Christian place.’

‘All right, Dick.’

He caught her to him. After a moment he said:

‘I hate to take your pretty summer home away from you! You know that, don’t you, darling? I think if we steady this flurry, things will come back all right. And then you can guess my first investment.’ She drew his head down closer.

Soon the storm attained to its fury. One shrieking blast followed swift after another. The blinding commotion of the icy whirlwind bent men to destruction. They sought cover. But in this black tumult there was no light to guide and they could find no cover. The only refuge left a man seemed his flesh and bones and what remained to him of a battered spirit.

‘Is it very bad, Dick?’

‘Yes, very bad, Mary. I have had to let the Baronne Street property go. And General Motors and Paramount Publix have smashed.’

She put her arms about him. He clung to her for a moment. Then they both straightened up.

‘Now, the truth is, Dick, we are getting down to real values. All the fictitious values are being forced out of the market.’

‘Well, darling, that is just about the fact of it.’

‘Now, then, Mr. Dick Brisbane, let us take stock of our possessions, our real values. Item, one good husband.’



'Item, one perfect wife.'

'Item, one exquisite daughter. Item, one glorious boy. Item, one enchanting baby. Item, one unmatched coloured mammy. Well, sir; what more do you want, sir! And if you hold me so tight you will smother me and lose the item of a wife!'

They had had many good talks, but the one that followed was the best they had ever known. Communion between two honest and valiant hearts qualified as a real value. And so the day dawned with a new kind of sunshine for these two people drawn closer together by the storm and seeking and finding the best shelter known to human kind. When the lesser gods go the great gods arrive.

After this a fair contentment settled down upon Mary, even in the midst of the storm. The reverberating crashes were no fewer and now more near than at first when the distant East was the storm centre—so distant and yet to Dick and many of his friends so tragically close. For all this, nevertheless, there seemed to be forming about her an intangible sense of safety. The happy voices of Mammy and the children under the trees now on this midsummer morning of 1931 fed the secret springs of her hidden life. And at the touch of a beloved hand,

'She becomes aware of her life's flow,  
And hears its winding murmur; and she sees  
The meadows where it glides, the sun, the breeze.  
And then she thinks she knows  
The hills where her life rose  
And the sea where it goes.'

She had a curious feeling that now nothing really dreadful could happen. No more heart-shaking distress, no more cruel pain. From now on, busy household duties, bounded in from much chance of contact with the great world of travel and possessions, it was true, but bringing her closer to human life—that was going to be her happy lot. With a light heart she dusted the things in the living-room.

Suddenly she heard Dick's tread. What was he doing coming home at this hour of the morning! The quick steps brought him into the room. Mary felt every fibre in her being stiffen as she looked at his face, grave with concern. Was the sense of security really forever to be denied human beings?

'Why, Dick, what in the world!'

'Yes, Mary, it's Mammy. What was the name of that little bank we put her money in?'



'The Creole Bank and Trust Company.'

'My God! I was afraid that was it.'

'Well, what of it!'

'They've gone under!'

'And Mammy's money?'

'It's all lost!'

'Oh, Dick, how too dreadful!'

'Yes, I'll never forgive myself! The fact of the matter is I have been in such storms of anxiety about my own affairs, I just completely forgot about the old woman. Why couldn't I have thought of her!'

'But, Dick, you did what we thought was best!'

'Yes, I know. But the savings of a lifetime. This just about gets me!'

'Mammy is a sensible woman. She will understand.'

But even as she spoke Mary remembered the pitiful outcry of the old woman when she thought she had lost her money two years ago. As she recalled those wailing cries, her heart trembled.

'Well, Dick, we must just tell her. Maybe she won't be so terribly distressed. She knows we will take care of her as long as she lives.'

'Yes, but that's not like having your own money.'

They decided to tell her that afternoon when she had had her lunch and her nap.

The old woman was sitting in her pleasant room, rocking placidly, eating figs from a bowl in her lap, the picture of serene contentment. How to break this storm over the old defenceless head!

'Well, how goes it, ole lady?'

'Jes' fine, Mr. Dick. In de summer days when I sets in a rockin'-cheer an' eats figs, seem like I got all I wants in dis worl.'

'That's the stuff! Now, we've got something to tell you that is not as nice as figs.'

'Yes, Mammy, do you remember the little bank we put your money in?'

'Cose I 'members it, Miss Mary! Hit was a nice little bank and dat young head man sho' a nice young feller.'

'Yes, he was a nice fellow. But, Mammy, that bank has busted.'

'What dat you say, Mr. Dick?'

'That bank has had to shut up shop.'



'And dat young head man done lost his job?'

'Yes. But that means the bank has lost all its money.'

'Dat so? Ain't dat too bad!'

It was difficult to make her understand. Mary twisted.

'But, Mammy, that means that everybody who put their money in that bank lost it.'

'Lost dey money?'

'Yes,' anxiously.

'Well, ain't dat a pity, Miss Mary!'

'But don't you remember that your money was in that bank?'

'My money?'

'Yes, your money that came out of the old mattress.'

'Cose I 'members dat, Mr. Dick!'

'Well——'

The old woman lifted her eyes and looked at them. That look said that she completely understood. It also said she was completely unmoved by the understanding. Mary gave a sort of gasp. The old trump! The old soldier! If she had to go down in defeat, it was going to be in high style.

Silently they watched her. She dropped her eyes to the bowl in her lap, picked up a fig, and with steady hands began to peel it. With complete deliberation she sliced down the peeling with the thin sharp knife, until the peeled fig stood poised upright on its slender stem, the sections of the skin hanging limply down in a circle about it. She regarded the pink mouthful for a long moment, then slowly put it to her mouth. Mary felt she heard it hit the bottom of the old woman's stomach, so complete was the silence.

Then Mammy broke it.

'Chillun, don't you nemmine!'

Mary felt her eyes grow warm and blurred. The old sport! Talk about heroes!

'Miss Mary, set dese figs on de bereau. Now you an' Mr. Dick set down in dem cheers and lissen to me.'

Mechanically they obeyed her.

'You see, hit was dis a way.' She paused, hesitated, and finally burst out:

'I couldn't no ways git no sleep!'

The vehemence with which the old woman made this enigmatic statement spoke eloquently of a deep experience.

'I couldn't no ways git no sleep. Dem fust nights after I come fum de horspital I jes' laid 'wake. I jes' laid 'wake 'cause my money



done gone away. Seem like I ain't never missed nothin' like I miss dat money.'

Mary looked at the old face, transfigured by animation, and wondered what was going to come next.

'Den one mawnin', 'bout a week after I come fum de horspital, I couldn't stan' it no longer. I jes' took dem two little books and dat wash list what dat young bank man gimme and walk down to dat bank place.'

Dick sprang up, but Mary sat still, listening uncomprehendingly.

'De young man he ax me what does I want, an' I say I want my money. He say is dat so an' how does I want it—in green-backs? An' I say I want it in gole an' silver *an'* green-backs like I give it to him. An' he laugh and say how he gwine do dat, an' I say I dunno, but dat de way I want it. Den he ax me is I got dat little slip an' I han' him de wash list.'

'Mammy!' cried Mary in a voice choked with perception and contending emotions, as she started up from her chair.

'Yas'm, Miss Mary, hit jes' like I tell you. He laugh an' den he talk wid de yuther young man in de bird-cage. Den dey bofe comes out an' I gives 'em my little book an' de young head man he write in it, an' den he tell me to write my name right dere. He know I kin write my name 'cause he done see me do it. An' sho' nuff, he give me my money back jes' like I give it to him.'

As Mary grabbed about in the air for support, she felt Dick's arm go round her. She closed her eyes as the rough seersucker of his coat rubbed her cheek. Steadied for a moment, she turned with a joyful voice to Mammy.

'Oh, Mammy, how wonderful! Go on and tell the rest of it!'

'Dey ain' no res'.'

'But what did you do with the money?'

'What I done wid it? I brung it home.'

'Yes, but where did you put it?'

The old woman paused for a moment. Then, with quiet dignity, she got up from the rocking-chair and walked slowly over to the bed. She took the pillows off, then turned the covering back till the mattress, still new and bright, came to view. Without moving her half-turned head, she rolled her eyes round toward Mary and Dick. They peered over her shoulder. In one top corner they saw a brilliant splash of colour—a big patch of red material firmly attached to the mattress. In the opposite corner a sizable patch



of yellowing white satin. Down toward the middle a blue patch ; on the far side a piece of stout-looking guinea-blue calico ; on the near side a patch of sheer-looking organdie ; down farther a patch of pink. Innumerable patches in a sort of kaleidoscopic riot of colour and shape, losing themselves at last under the folds of the covers.

Mary was aroused from her stupor by the sound of Dick's laughter. It went ringing and singing as she had not heard it for two years. Up and down it soared, gathering volume, peal on peal, loosening something pent up and tight in Mary's breast, shaking the patchwork of her world into pattern, making fear seem foolish and confidence the law of life.

Dick was vigorously slapping the old woman on the back.

'Bully for you, old J.P. ! Good old Mr. Morgan !'

'Dat ain' none er my name, Mr. Dick.'

'I'll be damned if it isn't !'

'My name Miz Smif.'

*New Orleans, Louisiana.*



## *A PAPUAN PATROL.*

BY LEWIS LETT.

'THE officer will determine the source of the Karuga river, and will ascertain what population, if any, exists between that point and the upper waters of the Boma.'

The words of the Patrol Order were very much in Bill Marston's mind as he stood at the edge of the river-bank, ready for the road. His stout boots were well greased; between the puttees and khaki shorts his knees showed, deeply bronzed; and the white shirt lay open to expose a broad expanse of sun-tanned chest, while, beneath a broad-brimmed felt hat, his grey eyes looked out, steady and observant.

Below him Forrest, the magistrate, stood on the narrow deck of the little launch that had brought up his final consignment of stores and was now returning to the coastal station. Already the exhaust was rattling harshly. A native constable was coiling down the stern line on the after deck, and the coxswain stood at the wheel, waiting.

The magistrate turned and nodded to him. The coxswain shoved the handle of the telegraph into the ahead position, and the bow line was dropped aboard.

'So long, Bill. Good luck.'

Marston grinned and waved an acknowledgment as the launch began to move. Slowly she curved outward from the bank, turned in a wide sweep, and headed down-stream. For a minute he watched her, broad-beamed and low in the water. The wave from her bow formed a broad 'V' across the width of the river, the wash from her propeller giving it a fantastic resemblance to the broad arrow that was the seal of the Government. For a minute he could see Forrest standing in the wide stern, obscuring the uniformed figure of the coxswain, and waving a muscular arm in farewell; then the launch swung round a bend, and only the steady throbbing of her exhaust came back to him. The last link with civilisation was broken.

Marston turned his back on the river and looked round the little clearing. Over an area of a quarter of an acre the timber



had been felled, and the four thatched huts that formed his base camp stood compact and orderly among the brown stumps that stood up raw and jagged from the brown soil. Round the clearing the jungle still stood, dark and formidable. On the western side the naked stems of trees were bathed in sunlight, while the rest of the clearing remained in shadow. To the north the river ran eastwards, patches of foam giving visible evidence of the rapids that lay just above, and explaining the deep roar of sustained sound that filled the air. Police in their dark-blue *sulus* and jumpers were turning away from the river, calling to the still immobile carriers to get back to work.

Orders were already given, and nothing remained but to see them carried out. In half an hour the loads were shouldered, and the long line was on the move. Marston stood by the edge of the clearing and watched as the men in single file disappeared one by one into the gloom of the jungle and along the cleared track. They looked strong and willing enough now; but the end of the day's stage, fifteen miles away, would probably show a different picture. Fifteen miles is not a vast distance; but when to mere mileage are added the dank heat of the tropical jungle, a rough track that takes ridges and gullies in its stride, rising steadily as it goes, and a load of fifty pounds weight strapped to each man's shoulders, the feat becomes no ordinary one.

He had little doubt about the first stage. His second base camp would be reached without serious trouble. But after that was a ten-mile stage over much more difficult country to the third base, somewhere beyond which Bolton was still cutting tracks through unknown country. And it was doubtful whether these soft-muscle coastal men could stay the distance.

The last of the long line entered the tunnel, and Marston followed. The police were setting a steady pace, so as to conserve the strength of the carriers as far as possible. And he, with only his own rifle to carry, passed them one by one until he walked at the head of the procession. Within an hour the surface had changed considerably. The stiff clay of the base camp had given way to lighter soil through which fragments and boulders of limestone were evident. Ridges were steeper and higher; creek-beds deeper and more precipitous; and the roar of the river, hidden by intervening jungle, was continuous.

It was late on the second day when Marston topped a steep rise and entered the little clearing of the third base. The buildings



were smaller here, and proclaimed plainly their temporary character. Round the edge of the peak on which the camp was built, trees had been felled to give a clear view of the surrounding country. To the south and east was a thick carpet of tree-tops that gave little indication of the roughness of the track that lay beneath them. To the north-east the hill fell sharply to a dark gorge through which the river ran, the thunder of its progress coming up like a deep organ note, and spray from the rapids and cataracts hanging in fine mist over the adjacent trees. Beyond it, and to the north, the country rose in jagged steps of ever-increasing steepness till bare rocky peaks stood above the mantle of forest, and the great mountains of the central range stood, aloof and threatening, above everything else in sight.

For several miles he could trace the Karuga gorge, a dark, almost black, line winding between steep-flanked hills, and marked always by the thin grey haze that hung above it. But beyond those few miles the hills were broken and split by such a tangle of ravines and naked cliffs that it was impossible to find any continuity. To north-east and north-west stood great spurs that converged in the north to form a vast funnel that was obviously the Karuga watershed; but the spurs themselves were intersected by chasms like cuts from a titanic axe; and here and there dazzling white escarpments nakedly advertised the dreaded limestone country.

It was at a point on the western spur that Bolton was now establishing a new base camp; and two days later Marston climbed the last steep rise that led to it. Bolton was there, superintending a small gang who were giving the final touches to the camp; and he turned eagerly as his senior entered the clearing.

Marston grinned as he returned the youngster's greeting. Nice to be welcomed like this; but he was conscious of vague uneasiness as Bolton talked on, his voice a little high-pitched and his words hurried. Nerves, obviously. Bolton was new to the Service, and this was his first inland patrol. He had been alone for ten days during his senior's absence; and the control of fifty natives in strange country had been a severe test. But his high-strung condition did not promise well for the arduous trip ahead.

'Been having any fever?' Marston looked at him keenly as he put the question.

'Oh—yes. A couple of bouts. Nothing to worry about, though.'



'Eating all right?'

The boy's eyes clouded a little at Marston's serious tone.

'I don't know. Yes, I suppose so. Why this cross-examination?'

Marston laughed. 'Sorry,' he said. 'But you've got to keep fit on patrol, you know. This is a great camp,' he added cheerfully as he looked round.

The camp stood on much higher ground than the last; and from an elevation of four thousand feet he could look east, south, and west over a jumble of lesser hills. Some twenty miles to the north visibility ended at a vast limestone cliff that rose sheer for some three thousand feet above the intermediate hills; a vast wall, without apparent break or terrace; its upper edge serrated, and standing out harshly against the clear pale blue of the sky.

The track had been rough; and a hard day had not been more than long enough to negotiate the eight miles of its length. Sharp-edged boulders stood out on the steep hillsides and strewed the valley bottoms. Miniature chasms cut across the track, and had been bridged by trees felled for the purpose. Streams, some mere trickles that had cut deep channels in the hill, others formidable torrents twenty yards wide, made their way through gorges where the descent was as difficult as the climb on the farther side. And throughout the day the sky had been hidden by heavy foliage where sinuous branches intertwined far overhead.

The long line of carriers began to arrive, each man grunting with relief and weariness as he dropped his load and stretched his cramped arms; many examining bruises and cuts on their feet and legs with loudly indignant protests. And for two days more they must repeat the journey, bringing up the last of the stores in readiness to move them on to the next base. Police, interspersed along the line, arrived one by one, and superintended the packing of rice-bags into the store. Cooks got to work with fire and tins and water. The sun set, and the police shed their blue serge jumpers and appeared in white cotton singlets above their *sulus*. Another day was over.

Bolton turned in early; and Marston, smoking his pipe in solitude after the evening meal, enjoyed again, as so often before, the atmosphere of a new camp. The air was light and fresh at this elevation; and above the murmur of talking voices that came from barracks and carriers' houses he could hear the musical



roar of torrents around and below him, and the myriad sounds of jungle night-life. The night was fine and clear, and the stars shone with the sharp twinkle of cold latitudes. And in the distance, faintly outlined, he could see the loom of the inland mountains.

But day by day the difficulty of the journey was increasing. Great boulders of limestone thrust themselves up through the sparse soil in such numbers that the distance from point to point was doubled by the need for skirting them. Although the crest of the spur was better than the tumbled mass of rock and fallen tree in the valley, progress was only made by frequent and painful climbing down gaps almost sheer and often a thousand feet or more in depth, and by toiling slowly and with great labour up the opposite side. Soil became more and more rare, and limestone was the only food on which the roving roots of trees could live. Like great ropes they twisted and intertwined on the surface, bridging sudden crevices where a fringe of delicate fern did its dainty best to detract from the horror of the black depths below it. Several of the carriers were incapacitated by badly lacerated feet; a few were injured by falls on the rough surface; and many among them began to murmur rebelliously as they repeated the stages day after day.

To Marston the conditions, though as severe as anything that he had experienced, were nothing new. But he noted with some anxiety that young Bolton grew listless and irritable under the continued strain. And when the comparative comfort of thatched huts was exchanged for the cold dampness of canvas, pitched daily on a rough slope where the trees dripped moisture, and the sun's rays never penetrated to dry the sodden tents, his anxiety grew.

The boy was willing enough, and did his job thoroughly and painstakingly. But Marston noted how he would throw himself on his stretcher at the end of a hard day, without enough energy to change into drier clothes; and how it became increasingly difficult to persuade him to eat the uninspiring evening meal. And steadily his exhaustion became greater at the end of each gruelling climb, till it became obvious to the senior man that the youngster was nearing the end of his endurance.

He came limping into camp one afternoon, pale and drawn, and dropped on to his stretcher with a stifled groan. Marston, the despatch-case on his knees doing duty as a writing-table, was entering up his diary. He looked up, schooling his features to show nothing of the concern he was feeling.



'Hullo,' he said cheerfully. 'Feeling rotten?'

Bolton moved irritably. 'I'm all right,' he said, sitting up; 'twisted my ankle on that last rise. It's nothing.'

Marston got up and stood looking down at him.

'I don't want to rub it in, old man,' he said quietly, 'but that sort of thing's bound to happen in country like this if you wear shoes instead of boots.'

'You've told me that before.' The boy's tone was resentful. 'Sorry, Marston,' he went on more quietly. 'I've always hated boots. They're so damned heavy and stiff. But I'll wear them after this.'

Marston got up, and stood for a moment with his back to the stretcher. The boy's words, and the tone in which he had spoken them, told him clearly that he was done, not only physically but spiritually. He was quite unfit to face the very much more severe test that was to come; and Marston began to search for a pretext under which he might send the youngster back to headquarters without hurting his pride.

Under his directions Bolton removed shoe and sock. The ankle was already swollen rather badly, and a nasty cut over the bone was heavily inflamed round its edges. Marston called for hot water, and for an hour bathed the wound and administered hot fomentations before dressing it for the night.

But the morning disclosed a cut that gaped and exuded pus in spite of the dressings. For two days Marston had to content himself with cutting a track on towards the north, while the injured man remained helpless in camp. At the end of that time it was obvious that no further pretext was necessary, and that only one course was open to him. He left the tent and called to a corporal, ordering the preparation of a party to leave for the coast at daylight.

'You're not going to send me back?' Bolton's voice had a pleading note in it.

'My dear old chap, I've got to. That's going to take weeks to heal.'

'No, it won't. I'm sure it won't. I could hobble on it now if I had to. I swear I won't keep you back.'

Marston laughed softly. 'I know you'd try,' he said, 'and I'm just as sorry as you are. I don't know where this trip may take us; but I do know that it's going to be a tough one. And we simply can't afford to have a lame man in the party. It might



cost the lives of the whole lot ; and it would certainly mean serious delay.'

Looking at the tortured face of the injured man, he refrained from telling him that probably his own life depended upon getting proper treatment at the earliest possible moment. But Bolton seemed to realise it, and turned his head away from the light.

'You're right, of course,' he said at last. 'It's just my filthy luck. Sorry I've let you down, Marston.'

At daylight the emergency-party started back along the track towards the first base camp ; and Marston watched as the injured man's hammock swayed and jerked down the steep hillside. Forty miles of that, and over a track as difficult as need be. But he knew that speed was the only thing to be considered. And he knew only too well how those poisoned wounds develop, and that only the most careful and unremitting attention could offer any hope of retaining the limb.

For three weeks his journey continued northward, slowly and irritatingly, while stores were gradually brought up, and the base advanced a little nearer to the head of the river. And at the end of that time Marston was driven to confess to himself that he could advance his base no farther. Progress was too slow to justify the inroads that a hundred hungry carriers made daily on his supplies. And there were many among them who could not be expected to hold out much longer. The great wall of rock was not more than five miles away now, and the funnel-shaped watershed was narrowing, the spur spreading out and rising westward to a comparatively flat table-land. At a height of something over five thousand feet he erected his final base, retained the best of the carriers, and sent the remainder with an escort of police back over the track to the coast.

'I've got the base farther north than I expected,' he wrote to Forrest. 'The valley is narrowing, and the head of the river can't be far away. I should be able to work with light scouting-parties from now on. Prospects of finding population to the west are not brilliant. It's all limestone country, broken and precipitous as far as I can see.'

Rain became a nuisance. One becomes accustomed to a daily shower anywhere in the mountains of Papua. But this was something more. Almost every morning broke grey and dull, with the monotonous sound of falling rain, and the landscape obscured by falling water and rising vapour. Sometimes the sky cleared



for an hour or so before noon, in preparation for a torrential down-pour later in the day. More often rain fell sullenly throughout the day, to pause for an hour or two during the night, while trees dripped miserably and a steady driving wind whined among the branches, and to begin again with the depressing dawn.

A week later Marston stood on the edge of a ravine at an elevation of nearly six thousand feet, looking across to the great limestone wall that had been his objective for the last month. Heavy banks of fog swirled about him, clouds driven by the south-east trade wind that made itself felt even at this altitude. Three thousand feet below him the river ran eastwards, and the dull roar of its progress came up to him, faint and muffled by the fog. Occasional rifts in the clouds gave glimpses of the gorge below, where huge boulders and ravines were dwarfed by the massive escarpment across the valley. He stood at about three thousand feet above the river; and the great rampart rose above him as high again. For a flash he saw something of the extent of it; miles to the east, and miles again westward; a sheer cliff, immense, unbroken, quite unscalable. Eastward, the hill on which he stood fell sharply to the valley down which the river roared towards the coast; and at its head a tributary could be seen coming in from the eastern base of the cliff; a fall of several hundreds of feet showing like a flash of tarnished silver against the deep dull green of the surrounding jungle.

Camp was made where a break in the hill gave shelter from the wind, now blowing strong and cold. And rain, setting in before sunset, made the night a miserable one. But at daylight the sky was clear overhead, and only the clinging masses of vapour about the flanks of the spur interfered with the view.

The source of the river was plain. Along the ravine below him Marston could follow its course clearly by occasional flashes of cascading water, and by the clouds of vapour that rose from hidden parts of the gorge. From the flanks of the hill on which the camp stood tributary streams flowed headlong; and at the head of the valley, westward, he could see through his glasses that the parent stream, reduced there to a rivulet, flowed through a pass between the northern cliff and the plateau on whose edge he had been travelling for the last month. The first part of his programme was completed.

He returned to his last base, and for two days he rested his carriers while with four constables he reconnoitred rapidly to the



west. He verified his observation of the river, camped for a night near its head, and returned.

Carriers were carefully weeded out, and the weaker, with the less efficient of the police, were returned to the coast. Loads were arranged and apportioned, and the outfit reduced to a minimum, so that in a three-weeks dash as much ground as possible might be covered.

As nearly as he could estimate, the distance across to the known waters of the Boma was something like ninety miles. To reach them with enough food in hand to take the party down-stream to where supplies could be renewed would necessitate an average speed of only five miles a day. And the distance might be reduced by the discovery of a tributary from the east, down which the party could raft. On the other hand, the country might be even more difficult than that over which he had already passed; and it was urgent that the patrol be kept going to the limit of its staying power from the first day until safety was in sight.

Rain was falling dismally again when the party set out on the following morning. Marston, in the lead, carried a compass and selected the direction in which the four police with him should cut the track. Carriers followed along the narrow lane, resting at frequent intervals while the leading police worked steadily ahead, then, at the command of their escort, shouldered their loads again and scrambled after the cutting gang. The undergrowth was not very thick; but the unevenness of the broken surface, the twisting roots of contorted trees, huge boulders of upheaved coral-limestone that stood like monoliths among the timber, and frequent gorges where minor torrents cut their way deep in the rock, made the going difficult; and it was growing late on the second day when Marston gave orders to camp on the edge of the Karuga where it ran through the pass to the west.

Camping was not the simplest matter. The ground was steeply sloping and boulder-strewn. It was a difficult job to erect the tents, and to find timber straight enough for the purpose. Wood for the fires was there in plenty, but all of it was saturated by the perpetual wet mist that rose from the river and by the banks of cloud that lifted but rarely from the sides of the mountain. But they were lighted at last, food was cooked and eaten, and the camp rested, the sound of desultory talk and occasional laughter almost drowned by the persistent voice of the torrent below.

Marston roused the cooks at half-past four. The morning was



raw and miserable, and the wetness of ground and of atmosphere seemed the greater in the dead darkness. He saw the fires well under way beneath the little lean-to roof that served as kitchen, and got under his blankets again until, an hour later, his orderly entered the tent with a can of hot tea. Through the open end of his tent he could see the heavily blurred tracery of twigs and leaves outlined faintly against the dull cold grey of early dawn. A bird was chirping mournfully somewhere near at hand; and the roar of the torrent sounded flat and unmeaning.

The light increased slowly, hardening to an indeterminate murk that seemed to absorb instead of transmitting light. But soon after six the tents were struck and folded, and the carriers squatted beside their loads while the six police, each with his kit strapped to his back in its neat canvas swag, rifle slung, and small axe in hand, stood in line awaiting orders.

Marston took the lead, and began to climb the steeply mounting gully beside the stream. It was hard going. The creek came down in a succession of falls, each from six to twelve feet in height, with comparatively flat stretches in between, where deep pools, brilliantly blue even in this grey light, lay still for a moment before flowing over the rocky shelves in renewed frenzy of energy. Beside the stream great boulders filled the gorge, and among them trees, black-stemmed, twisted and dwarfed, found what precarious nourishment they could in the sparse soil.

A dozen times during the morning the creek had to be crossed. In several places the sides of the gorge closed in to sheer cliffs that overhung the stream, and Marston was forced to climb the steep side of the ravine to pass them. Twice the procession was halted while the police constructed rough ladders of saplings and vines, so that the laden carriers might climb some abrupt wall of rock; and at midday Marston halted where the stream foamed up from underground to form a turbulent lake of milky blue that boiled and tumbled in mad exuberance before finding its outlet down the ravine.

Here the gorge was narrow, and the dry bed of the stream continued upwards to the west, a mass of tumbled rocks and steep ledges where delicate ferns grew in the crannies, and moss softened the harsh outlines of crag and stark cliff. Light rain was still falling, and the wind, even at noon, was cold and penetrating. Marston looked keenly at his carriers as they struggled one by one over the brow of the last rise and stood gaping at the seething



pool and the dry channel above it; and while a meal was being prepared for them he examined the feet of each in turn, anxiously. There were a few minor cuts and bruises, but he was relieved to find no injury among them likely to develop into anything serious. For a moment he felt tempted to camp there. His own feet felt tender and swollen, even through the stout boots that protected them; and he was reluctant to impose too great a burden on the bare-footed carriers upon whom, apart from humanitarian considerations, the success of the expedition to a great extent depended. But he remembered that this was only the third day out from the base camp, and that progress so far had not exceeded the necessary average. Until he reached the table-land above him it would be impossible to gauge the difficulty of the road ahead. He must make progress while it was possible, and try to get something in hand against the unknown difficulties that might still await him.

An hour's halt, and the procession started again, up, always up, to the west. The gully widened a little, and trees appeared again in the obsolete channel, moss-swathed like the rocks on which they grew; and the upward scramble over boulders and the crevices between them was eased a little by the sprawling moss-grown roots that twisted over the surface in urgent search for soil.

Caves began to show in the walls of the gorge, some dry, others slimy with moisture that trickled down their blackened walls; and outside one of them he had his tent erected late in the afternoon. Carriers and police camped inside the cave, revelling in its protection from the raw wind that flowed up the gorge, driving a stream of cloud through the cloudy atmosphere. A little dry wood was found there that sufficed to get a fire going; and more wood, split to convenient sizes was stacked round it for future needs. And Marston lay in his tent, wrapped tightly in his two blankets, and envied the natives their warmth and shelter. It was too cold for more than fitful sleep; and he lay watching the play of shadows thrown by the wavering firelight on the rough walls of the cave, and the naked brown bodies that gleamed and dulled under the pall of smoke that gathered under the roof and streamed out from the mouth of the cavern to be lost in the all-pervading grey mist.

Two hours on the fourth morning took the party to the head of the gorge and up on to the plateau. Here the surface was different, and even more difficult than in the ravine. The forest



growth was more dense, and the surface so broken and faulted that rarely could three steps be taken in any one direction. The upheaved coral was worn and twisted to edges sharp as knives. Fissures appeared every few feet, and ran in every direction. Chasms were frequent, where the tortured roots of stunted trees bridged depths in which sharp-pointed pinnacles threatened gruesomely. And great pillars of rock stood up obscenely, fifty feet and more above the general level, fantastic, shapeless apparitions that loomed suddenly through the fog and destroyed all sense of direction; so that it needed conscious faith on Marston's part to accept the readings of a compass that seemed to alter its pole capriciously.

There was no view. Many times he climbed to the top of boulders that offered foothold, searching the horizon for indications of the lie of the country. But swirling cloud covered everything, till civilisation, all human existence apart from his own small party, seemed a fantastic dream. The only thing he knew was that he must travel west, always west, and must hope that some time he would find the end of this chaotic wilderness, and descend again to habitable levels.

Camping that evening brought little comfort. There was no ground smooth enough for the tents, and few places could be found where even two natives could lie side by side between the crevices and the sharp needle-pointed spurs that stood up like splintered glass all over the surface. And Marston was glad to halt where an overhanging ledge offered protection from wind and rain. His own small tent was pitched with difficulty, and saplings laid as a floor over a small crevasse that ran through the middle of it. Perhaps worst of all was the absence of water. The surface held none, though rain fell continuously, and beneath their feet the party could hear the roar of subterranean torrents. Enough water for the evening meal was obtained by squeezing the moisture from the moss that covered ground and trees; but boiling did not rid it of its nauseous flavour of mildew; and rain-water that collected during the night in the canvas spread to catch it was tainted and stained.

Another similar day, and Marston began to feel anxious. At noon a break in the cloud had given him a view from the peak of a boulder of higher mountains to the north. No features had been distinguishable; but there was no mistaking the solid black mass that loomed a score or more of miles away. In all other



directions the plateau persisted. Tree-tops, dark and almost even, spread as far as he could see, broken here and there by ravines and cliffs that he was not eager to investigate closely. Rations remained for thirteen days, and, unless the nature of the country improved, it would take fully that time, or more, to reach the longitude of the Boma head-waters. Any additional difficulties would entail at best the reduction of the daily ration, and at the worst the failure of the expedition and the loss of at least some lives.

He thought for a moment of return. But even to return along his track would occupy fifteen days at least; and there again, a single accident might mean catastrophe. And to leave a project uncompleted was not in the tradition of the Papuan Service. No. He must go on. But he decided to work more to the south, where he might expect to find a lesser altitude and better conditions than in this unoccupied chaos.

Accordingly he started on the following morning south-westwards; but before noon the direction was decided for him. Clean across his line of march the plateau was interrupted by a precipice which fell sheer for a thousand feet to a wide valley beyond which another perpendicular wall rose formidably. There was no way down the cliff at his feet. And, even if the valley were attainable, it would lead him south-east, and away from his objective. His only course was to follow the edge of the cliff to the north-west; and he followed it accordingly, while his police strove with banter and practical help to encourage the carriers who grumbled and limped behind him.

For two days he worked along the edge of the cliff. Rain, which hitherto he had heartily cursed, ceased abruptly. The sun shone clear and hot from an unclouded sky, and the lack of water became a form of torture. Below, in the valley, streams were visible, dancing and glistening among black rocks. Beneath their feet the party could hear the roar of subterranean creeks rushing through abysmal darkness to burst from the face of the cliff hundreds of feet below. Even the moss on ground and tree dried magically, and offered no relief to the thirsty men. Without water rice could not be cooked; and biscuits, even the solid ship's biscuits that the patrol carried as an emergency ration, are poor food for cold and weary men; so that hunger sapped the strength of the party, and added to its sufferings. At night a fly was stretched in the hope that rain might fill it before morning. But dawn showed it dry and empty, while streams roared tauntingly below.



By noon on the third day the valley had risen, and Marston was able to lead his men down a steep rock-strewn slope towards its bottom, to camp at mid-afternoon beside a small creek that sang its way merrily in a series of cascades, to join the parent stream below. It was a joyous camp. The men forgot hunger and weariness and lacerated feet in the solid comfort of full stomachs and tents standing firmly on level ground. And their spirits were raised still further when a constable who had been sent out to scout returned with the news that he had seen signs of natives, and carrying triumphantly the broken shaft of an arrow that he had found among the undergrowth.

But Marston, though greatly relieved, was not deluded by the idea that his troubles were over. In the valley below him were the head-waters of a river, but certainly not of the Boma. He had as yet covered barely half of the distance to that river, and much depended upon whether the natives whom he hoped to meet on the morrow were able and willing to give him information. His way still led to the west, while the stream in the valley flowed south-east for as far as he had been able to see.

He was alert and anxious when the march was resumed on the following morning. With four constables he went ahead, cutting a track, and looking out keenly for signs, while the carriers, under the control of an escort, were kept half a mile in the rear.

It was late in the morning when a native track was found, faint but unmistakable, running south-westwards down the slope. And it was well on in the afternoon when, from the top of a minor ridge, a collection of poorly constructed huts was seen on a steep rise beyond a creek. Only the roofs were visible, brown thatch against the dark green of jungle trees; and a faint haze of blue smoke testified that the village was occupied. On the farther bank of the creek itself a garden, flimsily fenced, displayed poor crops of taro, a few sweet-potato vines, stools of sugar-cane, and a small grove of areca palms.

Marston waited for his carriers to come up, and left them concealed by the thicker jungle beside the creek; and himself proceeded, with two constables, across the stream and up the slope towards the village. It was not by any means the first time that he had entered a village in which white men were quite unknown; and he adopted the method that he had used before with almost unvarying success.

The two constables slipped loaded clips into their rifles and



reslung them, while Marston stuffed cartridges into his revolver and thrust it back into its holster. The element of surprise he knew to be of the highest value; and he approached the village quietly, subduing the sound of his boots on the soft soil, while the two constables followed silently on their bare feet. They were quite unobserved, and had passed the first of the huts before the alarm broke out. And before men had time to do more than shout in excited surprise, and to move towards their weapons, the three Government men were standing quietly in the middle of the tiny clearing, motionless, but intensely watchful.

The village clearing was nothing more than a narrow lane between two irregular rows of huts, sloping sharply up towards the west, its surface broken by boulders that protruded through the red-brown soil. On either side of it stood three or four huts whose roofs, palm thatched, extended to the ground. Between the huts, in the doorways, and at each end of the rough lane, naked brown men were shouting and dancing in excited astonishment at the amazing apparition of these three queerly dressed strangers. Arrows were fitted to bowstrings, the bows raised, strings drawn back and relaxed again, while the villagers ran from point to point, shouting insanely, and the shrieks of women added to the din as they scrambled, loaded with their scanty household goods, out of the village and up the slope behind it.

Marston and his men stood motionless but alert. And it was, as always, their immobility that won the day. All tribes in the interior of New Guinea know the meaning of a raid. They are accustomed to surprise attacks; and they know well that the sudden appearance of strangers is the prelude to a massacre that will certainly wipe out all who are unable to escape. And, even through their surprise and alarm, the quietness of these intruders appealed to them as something out of the ordinary. And out of that quietness arose a hope, absurd but persistent, that these unannounced strangers did not contemplate slaughter.

The hope grew; and with its growing the shouting died down until the mob of astonished men stood in groups, staring in wonder and expectancy. From the canvas bag slung on his shoulder Marston took a small sheath-knife, and held it out towards a middle-aged native who appeared to be something of a leader. The man's eyes gleamed, but his nervousness prevented him from reducing the distance of twelve feet that lay between him and Marston. Excited chattering broke out again, rising to a chorus of shouts



as Marston threw the knife to the ground at the feet of the nearest group. It was picked up, examined, and exulted over; and the brown men drew closer, avid for more of the marvellous steel of which they had heard, but which they had never seen until now. There was no further doubt as to their attitude. An order was shouted by the proud owner of the knife. Young men raced madly away up the slope, and presently the squealing of pigs announced that one of their number was to be offered as the guarantee of peace that is universal all over Papua.

Camp was made on the far side of the creek; and until long after dark visitors crowded it, examining curiously the material of the tents, the swags and other items of equipment, and stroking the barrels of the rifles that the police held jealously in their hands throughout the evening.

Friendship was established; but Marston realised with disappointment that no food supplies were to be expected from these people. A few small taro and some lengths of sugar-cane were brought in and exchanged for such trade goods as were available; but it was obvious that existing supplies were not sufficient to feed the village, and that there was nothing at all to spare for strangers, however weary they might be of their monotonous diet of rice.

Marston decided to rest his carriers for a day, and himself made a trip down the valley, escorted by a number of the local natives, who introduced him proudly to their neighbours. Villages were there, dozens of them, and all inhabited by the same type of small brown people; but all were suffering from the same shortage of food, and dependent, for the time being, upon their fishing and hunting for sustenance.

He tried, against the obstacle of strange language, to gain information about the country ahead. For a time the people were incredulous as the meaning of his signs came home to them. Grasping the idea, they were emphatically discouraging. In pantomime they described the difficulty of the desolate country to the west; the roughness of the surface, the cold, the absence of water, and the extreme ferocity of the tribes who lived at the far side of the desolate lands. So vivid was the description and so obvious their unwillingness to act as guides, that Marston hesitated. The journey over the plateau from the east had been bad enough. If his informants were to be believed, that to the west was worse. But his provisions were now reduced to eleven bags of rice, and



the longer journey down the valley and through unknown country from its mouth towards the north-west would take probably very much longer than the hard pinch across the western plateau. And these people knew the Boma river. At his mention of the name they described with graphic gestures how it rose gushing from the limestone and flowed to the south-west. Three days, they told him, would take the party to the source of the river; and they limped about him, their faces drawn in mimic agony to show how sore would be the feet of the carriers when they reached it.

By the offer of an axe and a knife for each—untold wealth to these primitive men—three guides were induced to show the way to the Boma; and the patrol started in the early morning, when the valley was full of swirling mist, and a cold wind swept upwards from the lower land towards the heights.

Three days. But it soon became plain that the estimate must be revised. These mountaineers were accustomed to travelling light and fast; and they led the way along a faint track towards the head of the valley at a speed that left the loaded carriers lagging far behind. Time after time Marston called them back; and they stood clicking their tongues impatiently, and shuffling eagerly from one foot to the other until the line of plodding porters came into sight.

As the next stage was said to be waterless, Marston decided to camp early where a small spring bubbled merrily from the base of a limestone cliff. And the morning's start was delayed so that a double quantity of rice might be cooked and carried on for the evening meal.

The plateau, when they reached it, proved very similar to that which they had left behind. There was the same broken surface, with the sharp-pointed coral needles hidden beneath a carpet of fallen leaves; the same dangerous crevices concealed by twisting roots and thick-growing moss; the same sudden drops over sharp ledges to small ravines where angular boulders lay tossed and jumbled. It was like walking in a limestone maze, where pinnacles and jagged slabs of rock rose high overhead, and progress was a succession of sharp divergences round the bases of impossible obstacles. But the guides seemed to know the route. Though they made no attempt to disguise their impatience, they never hesitated, never appeared to consult one another; but they hurried on urgently along ravines whose bottoms were chains of chasms separated by sharp-edged boulders; along narrow ledges



where they stooped to avoid the overhanging rock above them ; past yawning caves where water dripped from the roof to percolate instantly through the porous floor, and over occasional ridges from whose summits a view was obtained of an infinity of tree-tops shrouded in swirling mist.

The loads had grown lighter by the daily consumption of food ; but the faces of the carriers became more and more gloomy, those of the police more grimly set, as the days passed and the toilsome journey continued that seemed so objectless. Marston lost all sense of direction. The incessant variations of the compass told him nothing ; and only the wind on exposed stretches hinted vaguely at the south-east. A water-hole was found on the second day ; another late on the third afternoon ; but it was nearing sunset on the fourth day when one of the guides stopped suddenly and pointed to the ground beneath his feet. 'Boma,' he said, with a wide grin, 'Boma,' and hurried on. For some little time Marston had been half-conscious of a deep persistent sound, faint and evasive, that might be the wind moaning round the jagged cliffs or echoing in some exposed cave. Now, with the name of the river to help him, he recognised the sound as that of an underground stream. The surface was falling, too, falling rapidly in the direction of the march. Half an hour later the guides skirted the edge of a crater-like hollow, and pointed down into it. 'Boma,' they said again, and grinned. A similar hollow shortly afterwards gave out the roar of the river more plainly. Another note, as deep but less muffled came from ahead and increased in volume as he scrambled past one crater after another till he came to where the three guides stood together, triumphant.

'Boma,' they shouted in chorus, and pointed forward and downward.

At their feet was another hollow, circular like the rest, but filled to within a yard of its brim by water that boiled up into it from below, throwing out a wave that broke round its edge except where, on the farther side, it found its way outward, and roared over the surface in a channel that grew deeper as it proceeded, till the river was lost to sight in a sheer-sided gorge. In the direction of its flow the hill now fell sharply ; and Marston gained the impression of tree-tops spreading over a vast area some thousands of feet below.

Thankfully he sat on a convenient rock at the edge of the pool and waited for the rest of the party to arrive. It had been a



hard day. Not only had he covered the same distance as the guides, but he had been constantly backward and forward, trying to keep in touch with them and also with the carriers who lagged, footsore and played out, far behind them. And it was only now, when the day's effort came suddenly to an end, that he realised how tired he was, and how much greater must be the weariness of the laden men behind him. But the job was done. At his feet was the Boma river; and it only remained to find his way down the mountain, and to follow the stream down to known latitudes.

The carriers began to arrive; and each, as he came to the edge of the pool, stood with jaw dropped, staring first at the vague panorama below, and then at the cauldron where blue water boiled unceasingly. Surprise and relief seemed to numb their senses, so that they forgot lacerated feet and aching muscles, and stood with the packs still on their shoulders, staring stupidly at the first wide view they had seen for many days. Marston watched them, smiling. They caught his smile and reflected it; and soon the only faces that remained glum were those of the sergeant, a keen-eyed man from the north-east who was never known either to smile or to complain, and of a carrier who came in without a load and now sat aloof, nursing one arm, and showing a greyish pallor under his brown skin.

Marston noticed him and got to his feet. As he approached the man the sergeant stepped forward and saluted.

'E been fall down, sir,' he said. 'E hurt 'im arm. 'E lose 'im one bag rice.'

'Not a full bag?' Marston's voice was anxious.

'Yessir. One full bag, sir.' The sergeant's grim face seemed to suggest some of the gruesome penalties that alone could atone for such an offence. Marston hurried over to the injured man, questioning him as he began to examine the damaged arm. The native complained that he was hurrying to overtake a friend, and stepped carelessly on a moss-grown root that bridged a chasm, and had fallen. The thought of that drop into an abyss presumably bottomless made his eyes glare wildly even now. But his arm had caught in a crevice, and he had hung by it until two constables had lowered to him a length of vine and helped him to the surface. And the pack had slipped from his shoulders and been lost in the black depth below him.

Marston called for his medicine-chest, and bathed and dressed the badly lacerated arm. There seemed to be no bones broken,



and for that he was thankful. More thankful still that it was not a leg that was under treatment. A lame man to be carried, even though the way now lay downward, would be too heavy a handicap for his tired gang. The loss of a bag of rice was serious enough. Six bags only were left now; and each one represented a day's ration for the party.

The camp was a happier one than for many days past. Near the pool was a patch of comparatively level ground that permitted the erection of the three tents in something like their designed form. There was water in plenty; and the knowledge that the cold and difficult plateau was behind them raised the spirits of carriers and police alike; so that, for the first time since the beginning of the patrol, Marston fell asleep to the sound of songs crooned by contented men.

Long before daylight he was waked by the sound of whispering at the entrance to his tent. He stretched out an arm and turned up the wick of the hurricane lantern that stood on the ground beside his stretcher. The three guides stood in the triangular opening, grinning at him as they mouthed unintelligible words and made urgent signs to him. Of course. They wanted their payment, and to be gone on the long trail homewards. But they must wait. He needed more information from them about the route ahead; and that could be given only in daylight. He roused the cooks, and watched them throw off their blankets and cross, shivering in the light rain, to the tiny shelter where a faint glimmer of red showed that embers were still alive; then returned to his stretcher.

But there was to be no quiet meditation for him this morning. The guides were urgent and would not be discouraged; and a show of anger was needed before they were induced to leave him in peace and transfer their attentions to the police tent. But even when daylight came they had little information to give. They had fulfilled their contract. Here was the Boma river for which the white man had asked. They knew nothing of the future movements of the patrol, and cared as little. Their minds were full of the shining axes and knives, and of the thought of showing them to their fellows in the little village, three long days to the east. They had done their part. Let them have their axes and be gone.

Under the patient questioning of the police they seemed to indicate, even emphatically, that there was no way along the



course of the river; and with heads thrown back they pointed upwards to the north-west, to convey the idea that in that direction, but a long way off, a way might be found down the mountain. Beyond that they would not commit themselves; and there was nothing to be done but to pay them off and let them go. An axe and a knife were handed to each; and they hugged the treasure to their naked chests, white teeth gleaming, then started homeward at as near a run as the nature of the ground would permit, hacking with squeals of joy at every tree they passed.

Their going left Marston thoughtful. There were six days' rations remaining. And in those six days he must take his party down the mountain-side, through the foothills, and down the river at least as far as the first sago swamp. He ate breakfast hurriedly, and started alone along the brink of the river, leaving the sergeant to strike camp and follow. For an hour he was able to follow the stream, which cut deeper into the limestone at every yard, till he was scrambling along the edge of a gorge at the bottom of which the stream leaped and roared downward, invisible. And at the end of the hour he stood at the brink of a precipice as nearly sheer as anything that he had seen in this country, looking out over a mass of jumbled hills and ravines that lay some two thousand feet below him.

The side of the mountain ran like a huge bastion to the north-west, rugged, precipitous, quite impassable even by accustomed mountaineers without loads. There were ledges in sight here and there; and steep slopes down which climbing would be possible, though dangerous. But always above or below such areas was a face of bare rock that stifled all hope of reaching them, or of leaving them if reached.

A way was found eventually to the south-east; and throughout the day Marston and his police watched anxiously, helping where they could, as the carriers slipped and scrambled downwards, dropping often through several feet of space from one tree-trunk to the next below, sliding down faces of bare rock, or clambering painfully from crag to crag. Twice lengths of vine had to be cut and used as ropes to lower the carriers and their loads over sheer rock faces. Several times ladders had to be rigged; more than once a carrier dropped his pack, and saw it hurtle downwards to be intercepted by some outstanding ledge or pinnacle from which it was retrieved with difficulty and loss of precious time. But, late in the afternoon, the whole party stood at the foot of the



mountain. None was without bruises or cuts, more or less serious ; but the descent had been achieved, and the great mountain mass stood above instead of beneath them.

It was obvious that the daily ration must be reduced. And what remained was distributed in small and equal loads so that any disaster to one carrier might affect the food supply as little as possible. And for three days the patrol moved on, slowly, painfully, following the direction of the Boma through a maze of hills, hacking their way stubbornly through the packed undergrowth, and camping at night where the coming of darkness might find them.

Still there was no sign of native life ; and still the stream, swollen by the added water of several tributaries, foamed among black boulders in a succession of cataracts that thrust the hope of rafting well into the background. The carriers were not only footsore, but were suffering from the long-continued strain, and from the monotony of an insufficient rice diet unrelieved by any flavouring. And on the third evening after leaving the foot of the mountain one of them hobbled into camp an hour behind the rest, a constable carrying his pack and helping him to surmount the last steep rise that led to the tents.

Five days' reduced rations remained ; and after another day, during which the lame carrier was carried on a rough stretcher, it became clear that rafting, however risky, must be resorted to if the party was to get through without loss. During the day the river had seemed quieter. It still flowed swiftly, with sudden turns under overhanging cliffs. There were still many whirlpools ; many formidable boulders that threw the hurrying water up in foaming waves. But cataracts had given way to mere rapids ; and it seemed that with care and great good fortune, a raft might live at least for some hours, and cover in a day a distance that would occupy a week of wearing labour on foot.

A precious day was devoted to the construction of three rafts. Each consisted of three logs about fifteen feet long and thirty inches in diameter, lashed together by length of cane from the jungle, with a rough deck of saplings on which the camp equipment and the remaining three days' rations were loaded ; and as soon as the morning light permitted, Marston pushed out into the stream on the leading raft, the other two following at arranged intervals.

It was a gamble with fate, and Marston knew it. But with



one carrier completely lame, and several more at the end of their endurance ; with food supplies almost exhausted, and an unknown extent of difficult country still to be covered, it offered a desperate chance, but the only one, of taking his party through to safety. And as his raft entered the current, the part that chance must play in the enterprise became vividly evident. From the bank the stream had appeared swift. From the raft, as it hurtled downstream on the breast of the current it seemed far swifter. Suddenly the group of men on the still-stationary rafts under the bank receded at what seemed magic speed. The raft whirled and swung in the current, now broadside on, now dipping and dancing to waves set up by some obstruction beneath the surface. Time after time an ugly boulder was dodged by the narrowest margin. At several sharp bends Marston braced himself for a jump as the raft shot at dizzy speed towards a perpendicular wall of rock, to buck and wallow in broken water before shooting off again at right angles. More than once the clumsy craft slid up on to submerged rocks, hesitated at a perilous angle, and slipped off again into the current. But somehow the raft survived and flung behind it the equivalent of a day's march with each hectic hour.

It was nearing noon when one of the constables gave vent to an instinctive shout of warning. Throughout the mad voyage the voice of the river had been subdued except where low cliffs overhung the stream, or where it was half-blocked by giant boulders. Now there came from somewhere ahead the deep sustained roar of falls ; and where the banks converged to a narrow channel between low cliffs, a cloud of vapour rose warningly under the canopy of branches that met across the channel.

It was a close call. But with a few yards to spare the raft was cajoled by the utmost efforts of her crew into a quiet backwater among boulders above the fall, and held there by carriers and police who laughed in amazed relief, and slapped one another on the back in congratulation over the narrow escape. Marston scrambled up on to one of the rocks, to signal urgently to the second raft, which now appeared sweeping round a bend, its crew singing carelessly as it came. A moment passed before the signal was seen and understood ; then the constable in charge turned and waved frantically to the remaining raft, still hidden by the bend. But it was too late to save his own vessel. The current had it firmly, and no amount of poling or paddling now could affect the issue. The crew jumped clear as it bumped and twisted



among the boulders ; but the raft itself, with a third of the food supply and equipment, struck the sill of the fall, lifted, wavered, and disappeared in a smother of foam.

The third raft, with the taciturn sergeant in charge, had been warned in time, and was now safely held under the bank, while the sergeant himself was already clambering ashore to hurry downstream in the quest for orders.

Stores and gear were safely landed and transported to the foot of the fall. From a height of some forty feet the river dropped into a circular basin, steep-walled except where the stream escaped on the opposite side. Marston sent a small party back to launch the now-empty rafts over the fall. They came over easily enough, struck a ledge half-way down with a crash of splitting timber and snapping vines, and turned in mid-air for a second leap into the pool below. As rafts they were ruined. But as components of new rafts five out of the six logs were still serviceable. Camp was made a quarter of a mile below, and new logs and lengths of cane cut for the construction of a second fleet.

Night fell before the work was finished ; and daylight found the whole party eager to embark again. Food for only one day remained ; but Marston was not much perturbed. For limestone had given way to sandstone in the banks of the creek ; and a heavy overburden of soil clothed the rocks in most places. The vegetation too had changed ; and everything pointed to the probability that the low country was reached at last ; that the rapids would be few and harmless from here on ; and that sago palms, upon which they must depend for food, must be seen drooping their graceful arms over the river before many more miles were covered.

And his hopes were justified. An hour down-stream over rapids whose mildness was pleasant after the turmoil of the last few days ; two more hours on a current that was swift but smooth ; and the stream was joined by another coming from the east, its water turgid and brown with the mud of alluvial flats. And, during the afternoon, the rafts were drawn up alongside a heavy clump of sago palms, and the axes of the carriers bit deep into the white pith, while two of the police carried their rifles into the jungle in the eager quest for cassowary and wild pig.

For two days Marston rested his men, feeding them full on sago and game, and replacing the three heavy rafts by two larger and lighter ones. Then, with three days' food in hand, he resumed the journey.



It was clear now that the stream was not what he knew as the Boma, but a big tributary that flowed south and west to join it. It was wide and placid, and he had the remaining tents rigged on the rafts so that night need not interrupt their steady progress.

A few natives had been seen near the camp; shy people who came in threes and fours, and drew their canoes in under overhanging branches, staring in silence at the strangers who were cutting their sago, but refusing all invitations to come in and talk. But as soon as the journey was resumed their shyness vanished. The patrol had been under way only a few minutes when canoes shot out from the bank below them, from the opposite side of the river, and from above, where it had seemed that no population existed. They crowded round the rafts, hundreds of canoes, each bearing four men who flourished their bows and arrows and shouted in the Boma river language their demand for steel. Steel they must have; and they soon made it evident that they were as ready to kill for it as to trade.

Marston had been through scenes like this before; and he passed the word to the sergeant on the other raft so that, while the hordes of savage tribesmen howled and threatened about them, the patrol sat silent on their rafts, unmoved, and quite obviously unafraid.

This was something quite new to the river men. Resistance they understood and expected. A show of panic would be normal, and would add a piquant flavour to the joy of slaughter. An attempt at flight would be amusing, and would warm their blood pleasantly for the coming massacre. But there was something disconcerting in this attitude of cool intentness, and in the quiet assurance with which the white-skinned man and his queerly dressed police squatted and watched, their strangely shaped weapons lying across their thighs. In a few of the canoes arrows were fitted to the bowstrings and drawn to the head, while the wide expressionless eyes of their owners glared along the shafts at the breasts of their selected victims. But always discretion prevailed. Tales, perhaps, were remembered that had come through to them from neighbouring tribes; tales of the Government men who never turned back till their job was done, and of the rifles that spoke so seldom but with such sharp decision.

But the danger was real, and Marston was well aware of it. Cupidity was aroused, and the boldness of the river men would grow in the absence of retaliation. Gradually the canoes pressed



closer, till only a yard separated the nearest of them from the leading raft. Closer still, and Marston spoke a few words quietly to the nearest constable. The shouting was almost deafening as the ring of excited savages contracted slowly and surely. A talon-like hand was outstretched to grip the raft, and the climax had come. As at a signal, four rifles were raised, and almost simultaneously they spoke, spitting their jets of flame and smoke and steel over the heads of the encircling tribesmen; and Marston and his three constables were kneeling, facing outward from the raft, their smoking rifles at the ready.

As usual, the warning was enough. There was a moment of startled silence while the men gaped, wide-eyed, at the strangers who had acted so suddenly, and at the rifles that were prepared to speak again with their terrifying voices; then pandemonium broke out. Canoes collided with one another, and many men were thrown from them to seek safety in the muddy water of the river. Others paddled frantically for the distant bank; but most of them retreated to float in a wide ring about the rafts, excited still, but with a new and deep respect.

Marston looked towards the other raft. The sergeant and his two men were standing, rifles in hand, facing outwards. The carriers, unarmed, sat close-packed in the shade of the tent, jeering triumphantly at the river men, suddenly brave now that the danger was past. And the two rafts drifted on down-stream, with the chattering but less eager ring of savages at a discreet distance. All was well, and he set about the task of making friends.

By signs and a few shouted words of the Boma language two canoes, and two only, were invited to approach. There was long hesitation and much frantic discussion before the invitation was accepted; but at last two canoes separated from the rest, drew nearer, hesitated again, and came alongside, to receive each one of the coveted axes and some trade tobacco, and to give scraps of information about their villages and their neighbours.

They drew off at last, and the rafts drifted on silently down the wide stream. The weather was fine; and Marston sat in the shelter of his tent, gazing out over the glittering water. He knew where he was now, and that there would be no more trouble; and he was well content. He had done his job, and was bringing his party home without loss. He could travel day and night now, and without effort; stopping only to cook the necessary food. Two days more, three perhaps, and he would be able to enjoy the luxury



of a real bath, with toilet soap and dry towels; and a meal that did not consist of messy sago and tough cassowary meat.

A few days at the station to write his report, and he would be ready to start out again. He wondered where his orders would take him this time. Probably to make arrests for murder among some of the western tribes; perhaps over the arid, sun-baked country towards the Dutch boundary. Just possibly he might be sent into the Star mountains, up in the angle between the Dutch and ex-German borders. Difficult country that, so far as it was known; broken, unproductive, inhabited by scattered semi-nomadic tribes; all steep climbs and precipitous descents, and rising spasmodically to culminate in some of the highest mountains in the whole great island of New Guinea. Difficult country, yes; but, Lord, how interesting.

Yes; he hoped that it might be the Star mountains.

*Papua.*

#### *CROAGHAN MOUNTAIN, ACHILL, COUNTY MAYO.*

ROUND Croaghan rocks the mists are swirling:  
The chough's weird cry  
Echoes across the precipices,  
While far below turf-smoke is curling  
To a clear sky.

There's always mist in this lone fastness:  
In great white wreaths,  
It climbs the northern sea-cliff faces  
And melts into the bright blue vastness  
The falcon breathes.

Men saw God's likeness in this mountain,  
Aloof from vales  
Where they had made their dwelling-places,  
Thick-shrouded seaward—and a fountain  
Of strange dark tales.

MARCUS WHIFFEN.



## TALES OF A GUIDE.

BY THURSTAN TOPHAM.

## III. BEAR.

*It is not often one actually sees a bear in the bush, but on one particular morning an early rising member of our club had spotted two bears—a mother and a cub—in the act of swimming across the lake, and had roused the rest of us. We stood on the verandah in pyjamas and watched them with a good deal of interest. The mother bear evidently caught the sound of our voices, and the two put on extra speed. In a few moments they crawled out on the farther shore and disappeared at once into the thick spruce.*

*The same day Pete was paddling for me. In the heat of the afternoon fishing became very uninteresting, so I told Pete we might as well take a rest, and wait for the evening rise. We pulled the canoe up on a small islet and stretched ourselves out upon a carpet of thick dry moss, under the pleasant shade of silver birches. Pete began to fill a pipe with his beloved 'rouge quesnel' native tobacco. When he had got it lit I casually brought up the topic of the bears we had seen that morning, in the hope of getting him to disclose some useful knowledge on the subject of bears in general.*

'BEAR' is fonny *animaux*,' he remarked. 'Ack might' lak' 'uman people; jus' as crazy, sometam'. I will tole you somet'ing mebbe you don' know, dat some bear' is left-han', some is right-han' . . .'

'I know that,' I said. 'At least, I've heard it said often enough.'

'An' you know w'y for a bear is left-han' or right-han'?''

'No.'

'Dat's because when de yo'ng bear cub' is born, h'every one keep' de same place w'ere he's suck de milk from de moder, an' if anoder leetle bear cub try for feed from dat place, dat one w'at belong dere, he fight for dat. So each bear use one paw, de lef' or de right, an' he grow up lak' dat. W'en de bear hunt on de *rivière*, she's h'always use de same paw for catch de fish, and eef she fight wit' anoder bear she use dat paw w'en she strike.

Leetle bear cub, she's make me laff. She's not 'fraid for not'ing, she got de beeg *curiosité* for fin' out. She let you walk up w'en you meet on de bush some tam'; but you know dat's bad



for you eef de old moder come along. She try keel you for sure, dat's de h'only tam' she's *dangereuse*. More bettaire eef you see bear cub, you turn back; go de oder way.

Wan time w'en I work for de B—— Compagnie on La Tuque I see plenty bear. De *compagnie* ees got beeg camp built on de bush 'way nort' from La Tuque, dat's de main camp. Dere is beeg office w'ere dey mak' h'all de record for de lumber, mess-house for de men, and everyt'ing. Dere is one feller he's work on de office and he's got small bear cub w'at he buy from trapper dat catch de moder in trap. Dat leetle bear she get tame; some tam' dat feller bring heem along down to de office for make fon. De men teach heem drink milk from *bouteille*, an' soda pop also! De office she's got two floor, wit' stair' go h'up on de top floor an' h'under de stair' is kind of w'at you call cubby-hole wit' door. Dat's w'ere he's put de bear for keep him safe all de day. Wan tam', all de men w'at work on de office, dey go out for de lunch on de mess-house and leave de bear in de cubby-hole. But dat *sacré* bear get de door h'open some'ow an' w'at he do to dat office, eet's jus' too bad. He's crawl on h'every desk, he t'row all de paper' on de floor, he drink up de h'ink from de *bouteille*, and he drip h'ink all h'over de place. He's tore de map' h'off de wall, he's bite h'everyt'ing. W'en de men come back from lunch and h'open de door on de office dat's look like eet's de cyclone strike on dere. Dat man purty near lose hees job for dat, w'en de boss see de mess, an' he's mak' order for shoot dat bear *tout-de-suite*, an' also, no more bear' on de office!

But I weel tole you wan tale of a man w'at hunt de bear, de same tam'. He's yo'ng feller arrive from Montréal. He's get job on de office wit' de *compagnie*. He's very fine shot on de target, he's make w'at you call 'obby for dat an' he's win some prize', beeg cup', very nice. De *compagnie* give prize also for bes' shot on all de camp. He's win dat. Eet's a rifle, t'ree-oh-t'ree, Winchestaire.

D'ere is beeg dump near de camp, w'ere all de rubbish is t'row. I guess dat's 'bout quarter mile from de camp, so de flies stay dere, not come 'round so bad. Plenty tam' on de night, de bear' dey come on de dump, look for old tin can dat's got jam on de side, or mebbe de meat or somet'ing. But dose bear' very sly, dey run very quick on de bush eef dey hear somet'ing. So dat's not very h'often we see dem wit' de eye. Dey jus' leave de track'.

But dees yo'ng feller, w'at hees name' Macdonal', he t'ink he lak' for shoot wan bear. He's t'row out de ches' plenty because he's *première classe* on de target an' he say dat's easy for shoot de



bear. I tole him, mebbe you get 'fraid w'en you *see* de bear, dat's *différent* from w'en you shoot on de target. You don' have no experience. He's h'ack lak' very *supérieur*. He say dat bear she's beeg, beeg, can't miss him nohow. So he's go two-t'ree night w'en de moon shine good and wait for bear on de dump. But I guess de bear' hear heem mak' some noise too much, she don't *arriver*.

An' de oder feller' on de office, dey start keed him; say, "W'ere ees dat bear you go for keel? You not so hot like you say?" Dey get tire' listen him tole how good he is. At las' one feller say, "I bet five dollar' you ron lak' hell w'en you see de bear'." Macdonal' he's got mad and he say queek, "All right! I weel tak' dat bet!" De oder feller say he's only mak' fon. So Macdonal' he say, "Eef you want bet, I'll bet you five dollar' I get dat bear de firs' shot!" An' dey feex it up like dat.

An' at las' Macdonal' he h'ask me go wit' him for find de bear'. So we get hide in good place in de jack-pine and we wait; but dat's no good, de bear' don't come some more, an' we get tire' for wait and we go back on de camp. Macdonal', he tak' de *cartouches* out from de gun w'ile we walk back; he's very good, careful man dat way.

An', by gar! W'at happen? We mak' turn on de trail an' here ees *two* bear' not twenty yard' from de turn, right on de middle of de trail! So soon as dey see us dey turn roun' an' go lak' de devil on de bush. Macdonal', he grab for de *cartouches*, but he's so excite' he drop dem, an' before he's got de rifle load', de bear' she's *disparu absolument*! He mak' me promise for say not'ing 'bout dat w'en we are on de camp.

An' de nex' night I'm come back late from w'ere I am work' on de bush because I mak' hole in canoe and lose some tam' w'ile I feex dat, an' I go on de cook house for *souper*. De cook she's tole me Macdonal' has go h'out once more for fin' de bear. So w'en I am fineesh de *souper* I mak' promenade for de dump. An' I'm gone onlee small distance on de trail w'en I hear somebody ron lak' hell! I stay still, not move at all, an' here come Macdonal'! By gar, dat boy he's in beeg hurry, can't see heem for dust, lak' you say! He's lose de breat', he's not got no gun, he's not got no hat. W'en he see me he shout, "Ron, Pete! I wound de bear, she's right behin'!"

I tole heem don't get excite', an' keep *tranquil*. I'm listen on de bush, I'm not hear not'ing, but onlee de frog'. So I h'ask heem, w'at 'as 'appen? He tole me lak' dees. He say, "I go on de dump, hide in small bush below de jack-pine an' wait, mebbe wan hour. Den I hear somet'ing move on de oder side de dump, on the



bush, but I can't see not'ing, de moon she's not very high, mak' plenty shadow. So I wait. Dat's bear all right, I'm hear heem scratch on de ant-hill. After w'ile, he's come nearer, but still I can't see heem nohow. He keep mak' small noise, he grunt an' snuff on de h'air sometam', an' h'always he keep out of de sight. I'm not mak' no move for go fin' heem because I t'ink mebbe he hear me and don't stay no more. But, *sapré*, all de tam' he's get more near, an' I'm commence not feel too good 'bout dat. At las' I can't hear not'ing for five, ten minute' an' I t'ink dat son of a gun he's lef' de place for sure, an' I'm jus' prepare for go back on de camp myself, w'en I see somet'ing. Jus' de h'ear' an' de top of hees head stick h'up h'over small bush; an' I'm tole you she's not ten yard' from me. I don't lak' dat verree moch, she's too close for me! I hol' de rifle ready, but dat fool bear don't show heemself no more. Sometam' I see de h'ear', sometam' I don't see dat. De bear I t'ink she's got somet'ing behin' dat bush w'at she's interest', an' I get tired for wait. So I tole me, eef dat's de head w'ere I see de h'ear', de body she mus' be *en bas*. I tak' de h'aim 'bout eighteen h'inch from de h'ear', w'ere I t'ink ees de shoulder, an' I pull on de trigger. But I'm tole you I'm feel pretty scare' an' I don't wait for see not'ing more. Dat *sacré* bear she's onlee got for mak' wan jump before she's got me."

I h'ask heem w'ere ees de rifle. He look down on hees han' an' he say, "By gar, I leave heem behin'." I tole heem dat's bad for do dat, he nevaire mak' good hunter eef he leave de gun on de groun'. I say we weel go back an' look for de bear an' de gun. He say eef we do dat, we bettaire watch h'out because she's wound' bad. I say mebbe she's dead; we can't hear not'ing.

So after w'ile we go back, an' de bush, she's all quiet. He show me de place w'ere he's hide, and dere ees de gun, an' he pick it h'up, an' put in anoder *cartouche*, so she's full on de *magasin*. He say dat's more bettaire fire a couple shot' on de spot w'ere de bear lie, so eef she's h'only wound', we fin' out; an' eef she's dead, dat's do no harm. So he fire two tam' an' not'ing move; an' we go for see w'at 'appen. But, dere ees no bear dere at all, an' no blood; onlee two beeg deep track' on de groun' w'ere dat bear deeg in hees claw' an' make wan spring wit' hees hin' leg'. I start for laff an' laff, because I see dat bear she's even more scare' as Macdonal', de way she's ron. I say, "My frien', you mees de whole target, you nevaire touch dat bear, but you geev heem bad scare, you bet! Wait till I tole de boys on de camp; you going for lose five dollar'."



An' we walk back to de camp, but w'ile we walk I remembaire on de war, w'en I am *sergent* wit' de *Vingt-Deuxième Bataillon, Canadiens*, an' de *capitaine* he h'ask me at Courcelette for go h'up w'ere dere ees a block on de trench an' fin' h'out eef dere ees any Boches on de oder side de block. So I go verree careful, an' I carry some bomb' on de apron. I come to w'ere ees dat block across de trench an' I don' lak' put h'up my head too moch. So I raise heem verree slow an' jus' dat same tam' dere ees a Boche steeck h'up *hees* head. By gar, we are bot' surprise', bot' got de mout' h'open, bot' got de eye stan' h'out! I'm scare' for sure, an' I pull my head down queeck an' I ron lak' hell! I don' t'row no bomb, I'm scare' dat Boche, she's going for let me have wan. But I come roun' de traverse safe, an' I t'ink dat Boche he's lak' de bear, he's more scare' as me!'

Pete sat up suddenly as he finished, and pointed out on the lake where a big ring was spreading. 'Ha! Dat was good feesh; we go try for heem, mebbe? De sun she's commence for go down.'

(*To be continued.*)

#### SEA-GULLS.

STEEL-COLD the sharp white frost, this foggy morning,  
Low clouds, sullen, heavy, packed with grey;  
Downhill towards the sea-shore,—siren warning,—  
Puddles frozen, slippery, flank the chalky way.

On the curved front, not a single soul straying;  
Only one small figure there—a boy;  
A thin black form flinging food to the swaying  
Thousands of shrill sea-gulls, wheeling in their joy.

Some standing stiff-grouped, on shore, windward facing,  
Their white bellies bravely fronting north,  
Erect, proud, dignified, ruby feet tracing  
Sharply-etched arrows in sand, sea-ribbed with wrath.

Wide-arched wings, milk-white, curved as ibis, whirling,  
Silver-pale, against the leaden sky;  
Silent snowflakes, first slow, then swiftly twirling  
Shroud the brown earth and deaden the gulls' shrill cry . . .

MARY F. RAPHAEL.



### THE RUNNING BROOKS.

- Shakespeare* : John Middleton Murry (Cape, 12s. 6d. n.).  
*In Defence of Shelley and Other Essays* : Herbert Read (Heinemann, 10s. 6d. n.).  
*The English Sonnet* : Enid Hamer (Methuen, 5s. n.).  
*The Anvil of War* : Letters between F. S. Oliver and his Brother : 1914-1918 : Edited by Stephen Gwynn (Macmillan, 12s. 6d. n.).  
*John Freeman's Letters* : Edited by Gertrude Freeman and Sir John Squire (Macmillan, 8s. 6d. n.).  
*Living High : or At Home in the Far Andes* : Alicia O'Reardon Overbeck (Lovat Dickson, 10s. 6d. n.).  
*The Exile* : Pearl S. Buck (Methuen, 7s. 6d. n.).  
*The Last of the Empresses* : Daniele Varè (Murray, 15s. n.).  
*Marching Minstrel* : Violet Campbell (Murray, 7s. 6d. n.).

It is a curious phenomenon of modern literature that, though the value of poetry is seriously discounted to-day by all and sundry, as indeed the sales of the works of even our leading living poets attest, nevertheless books about the great poetry of the past continue to be produced by many of our most prominent literary thinkers and to attract widespread attention. In the last month two especially notable additions to these have been issued. Of the making of books about *Shakespeare* there is, doubtless, no end : but there has seldom been a profounder or more vivid study than that which comes now from Mr. Middleton Murry. Let us state our criticisms first, for criticism is possible—probably no book that has ever been written, certainly none on *Shakespeare*, can escape it. We would suggest primarily to Mr. Murry that he is in grave danger of so over-emphasising his allegiance to Keats that it becomes wearisome : as he justly says, 'neither Milton nor Keats has a place in the history of *Shakespeare* criticism. They were not *Shakespeare* critics but great poets instead'; nevertheless Keats is dragged in continually, often irritatingly, to the interruption of the argument ; moreover, whenever Mr. Murry has occasion to use the word 'death' he normally now precedes it by Keats's epithet 'easeful.' It may well be allowable to long for 'easeful death,' but only because it seldom in fact is easeful : to use it as a stock epithet is incongruous idolatry. Nor do we need to be reminded of Mr. Murry's '*Keats and Shakespeare*,' for this is, in our judgment, a very much better and greater work :



for the most part it avoids what Mr. Murry here calls 'the fatal suggestion,' but which he often made in his 'Keats and Shakespeare,' that master-strokes of poetry are devised and determined by 'calculating mentality,' a denial in fact of inspiration. It is, however, true that Mr. Murry can be over-subtle, and also that he cannot appreciate that the mind which was to a pre-eminent degree 'a thoroughfare for all thoughts' could write tragedy without necessarily being himself in a tragic phrase—but that is a weakness he shares with all critics. And it must be admitted that Mr. Murry is least successful with the great tragedies: both to 'Hamlet' and to 'Antony and Cleopatra' he attaches an extreme significance to a single word at which we may well believe Shakespeare would tolerantly smile, and he is singularly insensitive to 'Lear' as well as blind to the subtleties of Iago. And finally, why does he include, in addition (as may here be excused) to Keats, the name of Chatterton as one who would have become—if Shakespeare had lived—one of his two favourites? A very odd assertion, surely. But, when so much is all said, the fact remains that Mr. Murry has achieved the almost impossible: he has actually enlarged our knowledge of Shakespeare the man as well as of Shakespeare the poet and dramatist; to students as well as to ordinary readers, with profound learning and brilliant suggestiveness, he brings flash after flash of illumination, and he is so good on the young Shakespeare that one can hardly imagine that the first half of this great book will ever be bettered. *Shakespeare* by John Middleton Murry will, we make no doubt, take an enduring place in the world's library of Shakespearean criticism.

Mr. Herbert Read's purpose is widely different: his book is a collection of essays on literature, on literature and art, and on art by itself: they are unrelated except as subjects for critical survey, and they are never final; but they are all of considerable interest and often vigorously provocative. They cover an extensive field: Patmore, Hopkins, Swift, Diderot, Picasso, and the English painters, all these in addition to the long opening essay, *In Defence of Shelley*. It is still, however, for all Mr. Read's championship, not quite clear why Shelley needs thus to be defended: the principal reason alleged is that he has been assailed by Professor T. S. Eliot, who has let it be known that he is no admirer of Shelley: but was not this really a confession much more damaging to Professor Eliot's reputation as a critic than to Shelley's as a poet? We venture to assert that such attacks as Shelley may recently have



had to endure have in no way belittled his poetic achievements or standing; nevertheless it may perhaps be good to have the positive so trenchantly set forth by so distinguished a critic as Mr. Read.

Miss Enid Hamer has already produced a little book of study of 'The Metres of English Poetry': she has now followed this up by an anthology of *The English Sonnet* from Sir Thomas Wyatt to Rupert Brooke, a collection of a hundred and fifty sonnets prefaced by a scholarly and interesting introduction which gives the history of the sonnet and describes its two main forms. The interest in the sonnet, modernism notwithstanding, is perennial: the genius of man has invented no more perfect form for the expression of a single idea—if evidence be needed of its popularity in spite of all attacks, it can be found in any of our present periodicals. But because of its perfection its snares are great; and it is of much interest to study these examples chosen over three hundred years of our history and to be made aware how many have tried and how few have succeeded in this poetic form. The great sonneteers can be counted on the fingers of one hand, and many poets of the first rank either never attempted a sonnet at all or else never succeeded in the attempt, whilst occasionally a really good, though not a great, sonnet is found from an almost unknown pen. This is therefore an instructive little book and its notes are a valuable addition, though sometimes too obviously intended for readers of slight knowledge.

One of two notable volumes of letters which have graced the opening of the new year's publishing season is *The Anvil of War*, letters written by Mr. F. S. Oliver to his brother in Canada from 1914 to 1918, to which, in his introductory memoir, their editor, Mr. Stephen Gwynn, has added some important biographical details and an appreciative impression of the mind and personality of the author of 'The Life of Alexander Hamilton,' 'Ordeal by Battle,' and 'The Endless Adventure.' No brief review can do justice to the historical and literary interest of these letters of which the longest section, dealing with Mr. Oliver's visit to Passchendaele and G.H.Q. in 1917, is an account of observations and of contacts whose vividness and trenchancy are unforgettable. The whole book is a survey of history in the making, not only of events, but of men. As such it would seem destined to occupy a high place among the authoritative records of its period, no less than in the bright constellation of the works of a writer and commentator of whom Mr. Gwynn aptly puts it, 'What he wrote was in the first



place literature,' and of whom Professor Trevelyan, in another connection, said: 'It is a pity there are few such books; but there are few such men.'

'The leisurely, lively and peaceable pages' of *John Freeman's Letters*—as Mr. Walter de la Mare describes them—offer a sharp contrast, at any rate in content. Yet in themselves F. S. Oliver and John Freeman exemplified a mutual, and somewhat rare, ability, that of achieving success in literature as well as business. For whereas the first was for many years an active director of a well-known drapery firm, the second passed the official working hours of his life in control of a big insurance company. Those already familiar with Mr. Freeman's poetry will welcome this book for its own sake. Those for whom it makes first acquaintance with a writer of such firmly handled, delightful prose will surely wish to read his poems also. For this is a book to captivate both thought and imagination. Its felicity of literary form is never pedantic: its humour is as human as it is often gloriously absurd: its expression of its author's critical faculty incisive and courageous. And beneath its pleasant, tinkling shallows of 'gossip' run the still waters of poetic aspiration and experience.

It is not easy to define exactly wherein lies the compelling charm of Mrs. Alicia O'Reardon Overbeck's *Living High or At Home in the Far Andes*. For charm it undoubtedly has, almost one might say, magnetism. And long before the end of the opening chapters describing the arrival of the American author and her family at the tent perched thirteen thousand feet above sea level on a Bolivian mountain-side which was to be her home for a number of years, the reader is absorbed in the fortunes of the little mining community—its men, its children, its animals and native servants, most of all its women—and has become keenly aware, as of some crouching, inimical presence, of 'the Altitude.' It is an extraordinarily vivid narrative of fact, written with a humorous acceptance of hardship that is all the braver because it is so gay: of domestic and social comedy: of tragedy, and sordidness, and beauty. A gallant, laughing, lively book,\* rich in deft characterisation, and full of interesting information about a little-known part of the world.

There is much of the same unhaloed heroism—though here the setting is fiction instead of fact—in the American heroine of *The Exile*, a character drawn with the characteristic tenderness, humour, insight, and pathos which Mrs. Pearl S. Buck knows so well how to set one against the other. The main background of this, her



latest novel, is, as is to be expected, China, though its content and method differs considerably from those of her earlier work, and we are given glimpses of the American home from which Carie set forth on her lifelong and tragically unfulfilled quest for God in company with her missionary husband. The story of this spiritual search, bound up as it is with her maternity and bereavements, with the exigencies of living and of travel implicit in her husband's mission, of Carie's valiant stand against adversity, illness, danger, and distress, of the brighter places of her life once it had taken root in alien soil, of her final acceptance of her own limitations and the complete simplification of her religion—all these Mrs. Buck reveals with a clarity that is at times almost painful in its objective force and directness.

Signor Daniele Varè's portrait of *The Last of the Empresses* has been framed by its author in a study of contemporary China that bears, in addition to the hall-mark of wide scholarship, much of the delicate charm and humour which made the reading of 'The Maker of Heavenly Trousers' so delectable a process. A considerable amount of new information upon the history of the Dowager Empress Tzu-Hsi, last of the great Manchu rulers, has recently come to light which, coupled by Signor Varè with his own intimate knowledge of China and its people—he was first Secretary of the Italian Legation and later Minister Plenipotentiary in Peking—has resulted in a book whose interest is as great as its topicality is obvious. Here are no ponderous pages, their sentences entangled in the technicalities of diplomacy, but a lucid analysis of facts that reads more easily than many novels, and has for its central subject an almost mythical, yet very human, figure which Signor Varè has clothed in all the splendour of her Oriental sovereignty yet who, with her dying breath, declaimed against the evil of allowing a woman to hold the supreme power in the State. It is a dramatic story of which the historical and contemporary significance is thrown into sharp relief by the author's finely restrained artistry in words and colour.

Mrs. Violet Campbell's remarkable first novel, 'Seed of Adam,' has now been followed by *Marching Minstrel*, a book so different in theme, background, and characterisation as to reveal an astonishing versatility in its author. For this is a tale of the minstrel, Perroquet, who, travelling the roads of southern Europe with his guitar a hundred years ago, was caught, like a leaf in a storm, in Sir John Moore's retreat to Corunna, in describing which Mrs.



Campbell has achieved a most poignant piece of historical reconstruction. Yet despite this and other later preoccupations with tragedy, much of the story has an appropriate, lilting gaiety as it swings from country to country to the tune of its aptly rhythmed title. And if at times one could wish that the author had been a little less generous in the crowding of her canvas, a trifle less inconsistent in the shifting of the tale's dramatic focus, this is not to belittle her book's fine qualities of vivid narrative and glowing colour, of comedy neatly timed, and of romantic pathos.

When Sir James Barrie wrote of Lord Gorell's last volume of poems that it contained 'verse so beautiful that all who read it must be beholden to him,' his words found many an answering echo. That volume has now a successor—*In the Potter's Field and Other New Poems* (Murray, 5s. n.)—a collection of poems all written within the last two years which should be of special interest to readers of CORNHILL. In addition to the study of the dying Keats and other poems which have appeared in CORNHILL from time to time, the volume contains a dramatic presentation of the great tragedy of all time, the betrayal of Christ, as seen through the mind of Judas Iscariot, and many other poems never previously published. The book ends with a separate part containing two studies of to-day, the second being that of a banquet in London (time July, 1935) with the many criss-cross currents of thought and feeling: to this is attached a satirical commentary of notes in the 'modern' manner.



## THE 'CORNHILL' COMPETITION.

## DOUBLE ACROSTIC No. 149.

THE EDITOR of the CORNHILL offers two prizes of books to the value of £1 from John Murray's catalogue, to the two solvers of the Literary Acrostic whose letters are opened first. Answers must be addressed to the Acrostic Editor, 50 Albermarle Street, W.1, and must contain the Coupon from page iv of the preliminary pages of this issue. They must reach the Editor by the 28th March.

'And no muscle I move  
As I lie at full length;  
But no matter—I feel  
I am ——— at ———.'

1. 'I hear the ——— struck in the night;  
I see the cabin-window bright,  
I see the sailor at the wheel'
2. 'Not in ——— forgetfulness,  
And not in utter nakedness  
But trailing clouds of glory do we come'
3. 'To pull the ——— thy brow to braid  
And press the rue for wine'
4. 'Sound of vernal showers  
On the ——— grass.'
5. 'And the treason, too long pent  
To his ears was ———'
6. 'Through the sad heart of ———, when, sick for home,  
She stood in tears amid the alien corn.'

Answer to Acrostic 147, January number: 'And answer, echoes, answer, dying, dying, dying.' (Tennyson: 'Blow, Bugle, Blow'). 1. *Elisa* (Edmund Spenser: 'To Elisa'). 2. *Cedar* (Coleridge: 'Kubla Khan'). 3. *Hellas* (Shelley: 'Hellas'). 4. *Overflow* (Shelley: 'To a Skylark'). 5. *ErE* (Coleridge: 'Youth and Age'). 6. *Slumber* (Wordsworth: 'Lucy' (V)).

The first correct answers opened were sent by Miss D. Hayward, The Holt, Eynsham, and Miss W. M. Hall, 57 James Street, Louth, Lincs. These two solvers are invited to choose books to the value of £1 from John Murray's catalogue.



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